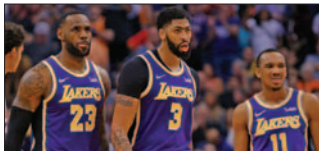


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Iran launches underground ballistic missiles during exercise

By AMIR VAHDAT
AND JON GAMBRELL
Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard launched underground ballistic missiles as part of an exercise involving a mock-up aircraft carrier in the Strait of Hormuz, state television reported Wednesday.

It was the latest barrage in a drill that the previous day saw two American bases temporarily go on alert over the launches.

Drone footage captured by the Guard showed two missiles blasting out from covered positions in what appeared to be a desert plateau in central Iran, with debris flying up in the air in their wake.

The launches took place on Wednesday, said Gen. Amir Ali Hajizadeh, the head of the Guard's aerospace division. He told state television it was the first time the Guard had done this, though the paramilitary force is known to have vast underground bases hiding its ballistic missile arsenal.

SEE IRAN ON PAGE 7

Pentagon plans to remove about 12,000 troops from Germany

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon will remove nearly 12,000 troops from Germany, sending thousands of service members home to the United States and shifting others to different locations in Europe, Defense Sec-

retary Mark Esper announced Wednesday.

The plan would fulfill President Donald Trump's demands to remove thousands of troops from Germany, which he has long derided as delinquent on its defense spending obligations within NATO. The announcement also comes after a

months-long review of American force strength in Europe, where some troops are permanently stationed and others deploy on rotational tours to train alongside NATO allies in an effort to deter Russian aggression on the continent.

"It is important to note that in
SEE GERMANY ON PAGE 4

2nd Armored Brigade
Combat Team, 1st Cavalry
Division Commander
Col. Jeremy S. Wilson
takes part in a change of
command ceremony at
Grafenwoehr, Germany,
on May 28.

GREG STEVENS/ Louisiana Army
National Guard



SEPAHNEWS/AP

The Iranian Revolutionary Guard launches an underground ballistic missile during a military exercise Wednesday.

BUSINESS/WEATHER

US consumer confidence drops as virus spreads

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. consumer confidence tumbled in July to a reading of 92.6 as coronavirus infections spread in many parts of the country.

The Conference Board, a New York research organization, reported Tuesday that its Consumer Confidence Index fell from a June reading of 98.3. The weakness came from a drop in the expectations index, which measures consumer views about the short-term outlook for income, business and

labor market conditions.

The consumer confidence index is closely watched for signals it can send about future consumer spending, which accounts for 70% of economic activity.

The Conference Board said that the large decline in the expectations index reflected big drops in sentiment in Michigan, Florida, Texas and California, all states that have seen a resurgence in coronavirus cases.

"Consumers have grown less optimistic about the short-term

outlook for the economy and labor market and remain subdued about their financial prospects," said Lynn Franco, senior director of economic indicators at the Conference Board.

"Such uncertainty about the short-term future does not bode well for the recovery, nor for consumer spending," he said.

The overall index stood at a high for this year of 132.6 in February before the pandemic forced shutdowns across the country in March and April.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates			
Euro costs (July 30)	\$1.15	Switzerland (Franc)	0.9160
Dollar buys (July 30)	60.8295	Thailand (Baht)	31.43
British pound (July 30)	\$1.26	Turkey (New Lira)	6.3720
Japanese yen (July 30)	108.00	(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)	
Commercial rates			
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770		
British pound	\$1.2987		
Canada (Dollar)	1.3349		
China (Yuan)	7.0620		
Denmark (Krone)	6.3205		
Egypt (Pound)	15.9707		
Euro	\$1.1575/0.8506		
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7502		
Hungary (Forint)	254.59		
Israel (Shekel)	3.4083		
Japan (Yen)	105.01		
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3059		
Norway (Krone)	9.6265		
Philippines (Peso)	49.05		
Poland (Zloty)	3.76		
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7504		
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3761		
South Korea (Won)	1,193.51		

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	3.25
Discount rate	3.25
Federal funds market rate	0.09
3-month bill	0.11
30-year bond	1.22

WEATHER OUTLOOK

THURSDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



THURSDAY IN EUROPE



FRIDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

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PACIFIC

US and Australia discuss countering China

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — U.S. and Australian defense and foreign policy leaders said Tuesday that their close alliance is committed to countering Chinese actions in the Indo-Pacific region where trade and freedom of navigation are key to each country's security.

"Today, we discussed a range of issues regarding the future of the region, including the impact of the global pandemic, as well as the security situation in the South China Sea specifically, and the Indo-Pacific, more generally," Defense Secretary Mark Esper said during a news briefing following the 2020 Australia-U.S. Ministerial Consultations held at the State Department.

The annual ministerial meeting included Esper, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and their Australian counterparts Defense Minister Linda Reynolds and Foreign Minister Marise Payne.

"Our two great democracies face immediate crises like the (coronavirus) pandemic, and longer-term challenges like the Chinese Communist Party's ambitions. We need to deal with each of these challenges simultaneously," Pompeo said.

Esper called the Indo-Pacific region the "United States' priority theatre."

The Pentagon's 2018 National Defense Strategy has shifted the military's focus from counterterrorism operations to "great-power competition" with China and Russia. The economic policies of China and its militarization of the South China Sea and Russia's efforts to undermine NATO and its nuclear arsenal are major concerns for the U.S. military, according to the strategy.

The South China Sea has long been a contested waterway. Ships in the 7th Fleet's operations regularly conduct freedom-of-navigation and presence operations in the South China Sea where China asserts it has maritime claims over a series of disputed islands. The shipping routes in the region are vital to global commerce and an estimat-

ed \$3.4 trillion in trade passed through the South China Sea in 2016, according to the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a think tank in Washington, D.C.

More so, tensions between the United States and China have increased in recent weeks. The U.S. requested a Chinese consulate in Houston be closed last week after the U.S. accused China of using the facility for espionage efforts, CNN reported. China then retaliated by requesting the closure of an American consulate in Chengdu.

Throughout July, there have been naval exercises and movements throughout the Indo-Pacific region, including aircraft carriers USS Nimitz and USS Ronald Reagan and their strike groups in the South China Sea conducting drills during the Fourth of July weekend.

"Together we share a common vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific where all nations, big and small, can enjoy the benefits of sovereignty. Where free, fair, and reciprocal trade are the norm. Where states adhere to international rules and norms. And where international disputes are resolved peacefully," Esper said Tuesday of the U.S. alliance with Australia.

The United States has about 1,200 Marines in Darwin, Australia, for training and exercises. Esper avoided providing details on whether there were any discussions to increase the number of Marines deployed there or hosting intermediate range missiles in the country, which the Australian government has said they are against.

Esper would only say he and Reynolds discussed the "capabilities" that each country possess and the "desire to advance them," including hypersonic weapons.

"I think it's important as we think forward about how do we deter bad behavior in the Indo-Pacific and how we defend the international rules based order, in this case specifically with regard to China," he said.

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BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/AP

Australia's Foreign Minister Marise Payne, left, and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, center, listen as Defense Secretary Mark Esper speaks at a news conference on Tuesday in Washington.

US commander affirms US support for Japan regarding China dispute

Associated Press

TOKYO — The United States supports Japan's protests over Chinese ships venturing into the economic waters near disputed East China Sea islands, the commander of the U.S. Forces in Japan said Wednesday.

"The United States is 100% absolutely steadfast in its commitment to help the government of Japan with the situation in Senkaku," Lt. Gen. Kevin Schneider said of the group of islands, which are controlled by Japan.

China also claims the islands, which it calls Diaoyu.

"That's 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There is no deviation in

that regard," Schneider told reporters.

Japan has long protested the repeated presence of Chinese coast guard vessels in the waters. Schneider also noted such incursions had increased recently.

He called China the "No. 1 challenge" in regional security, although North Korea was the more "immediate threat," given its weapons development.

Schneider said the U.S. was offering Japan surveillance information and other support, such as "reconnaissance capability," which refers to monitoring the whereabouts of a potential enemy, to help Japan "assess the situation and to fig-

ure out exactly what's going on in the water in and around the Senkaku."

China shrugged off such concerns.

Wang Wenbin, spokesperson for the Chinese foreign ministry, reassessed China's claim to the islands, stressing it was the country's "inherent right to carry out patrol and law enforcement" activities in the area.

"We hope that relevant parties will do something helpful to maintain regional peace and stability and avoid words and deeds that are not conducive to regional peace and stability," Wang told reporters at a daily press briefing.

Yokota airman injured in crash while under the influence, officials say

By SETH ROBSON
AND HANA KUSUMOTO
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Four U.S. airmen were involved in "a major vehicle accident" over the weekend in western Tokyo while "allegedly under the influence of alcohol," the Air Force confirmed Wednesday.

The accident, which is under investigation, happened at 12:34 a.m. Sunday in Tachikawa, Yokota's 34th Airlift Wing said in a statement. All four airmen are assigned to the base, which is also home to U.S. Forces Japan and 5th Air Force.

The driver was under the influence of alcohol when the vehicle crashed into roadside trees in the city's Fujimi area, a Tachikawa police spokesman told Stars and Stripes on Wednesday. It's customary in Japan for some government officials to speak to the media on condition of anonymity. "One Airman was injured and taken to a local hospital for treatment and is in stable condition," the wing's statement said.

The crash follows another on July 17 involving a Yokota civilian, wing spokeswoman Kaori Matsukasa said in a follow-up email Wednesday.

The accident happened while

the person was driving under the influence of alcohol in Tanazawa, Okutama, at approximately 5:25 p.m., she said. No injuries were reported, and the incident is still under investigation.

On Tuesday, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and five cities and a town near Yokota wrote to the Air Force and the Japanese government urging them to take measures against drinking and driving, according to the letter posted on Hamura city's website.

The letter, which cites the recent crashes and three accidents involving Yokota personnel last year, urges the Air Force to ban off-base drinking or even pro-

hibit the consumption of alcohol altogether.

The wing said it takes driving under the influence very seriously.

"From the moment a member arrives to Yokota Air Base, they are not only briefed about their critical role in the defense of Japan and our important relationship with our community members, but also the importance of safety and what is expected of them as representatives of the U.S. Air Force," Wednesday's statement said.

Yokota personnel are also prohibited from going to bars or nightclubs under policies in-

tended to slow the coronavirus' spread. That policy was retained in updated guidance issued Wednesday.

"The Air Force has a long-established zero tolerance policy in respect to driving under the influence (DUI) of alcohol," the statement said. "Violations of the law are treated with severe disciplinary measures. Under our regulations, members who drive under the influence have their driving privileges suspended or revoked."

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EUROPE

Germany: 24K troops would be left in ally

FROM FRONT PAGE

NATO's 71-year history, the size, composition and disposition of U.S. forces in Europe has changed many times," Esper said during a Pentagon news briefing. "As we've entered a new era of great-power competition we are now at another ... inflection point in NATO's history. I am confident the alliance will be all the better and stronger for it."

The plan would move about 5,600 American troops now in Germany to other NATO countries, largely Belgium and Italy. It would send another roughly 6,400 troops to new permanent stations in the United States. Esper did not identify U.S. bases that could receive an influx in troops.

The moves would leave about 24,000 troops in Germany, he said. It would also include plans to begin heel-to-toe rotations of Army Stryker brigades into Eastern Europe.

The moves will cost billions of dollars "over time," Esper said, adding the Pentagon had yet to produce precise cost analysis of the plans.

Some forces could be moved "within weeks," he said, without specifying which units could be first to move. Other units will be moved after long-term planning, which Esper acknowledged was likely to "change to some degree" over time.

He pledged transparency through the process, and promised service members and their families would receive notification well in advance of moves.

Units identified to move

The moves will impact tactical units and major headquarters, including U.S. European Command, and potentially U.S. Africa Command.

The Army's 2nd Cavalry Regiment in Vilseck, which is the only brigade-sized ground unit left in Germany, will return to the United States, Esper said. The regiment has about 4,500 soldiers and is the largest unit impacted by the changes.

The regiment has played a key role in enhancing the military's efforts along NATO's eastern flank, regularly rotating squadrons 50 miles from the Russian military exclave of Kaliningrad.

Wherever 2nd Cavalry Regiment soldiers end up being stationed in the United States, they can still expect to spend significant time in Europe, Esper said. They will be among the brigades regularly deployed to Eastern Europe to train with NATO allies with an eye toward deterring Russia. The rotational brigades will largely train in the Black Sea region, where the U.S. Army has been building up in Romania for several years and already has a steady presence of rotational forces at Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base.

The Pentagon also will move an Air Force F-16 unit, the 480th Fighter Squadron, from Spangdahlem Air Base to Aviano Air Base in Italy.

EUCOM, which oversees all U.S. military efforts on the Continent, will move its 600 troops and 300 civilians from its Stuttgart headquarters to Mons, Belgium. There it will be located with NATO's military command, Air Force Gen. Tod Wolters, EU-COM's commander, said Wednesday.

Special Operations Command-Europe, now in Stuttgart, will also move to Mons. It was not immediately clear if the move will also impact special operations tactical units in Stuttgart, where there is a contingent of Green Berets and Navy SEALs. Wolters said other smaller, unnamed units, also would be shifted to Belgium. Those included three "brigade-sized" headquarters, an Army air defense artillery battalion and an engineering battalion.

AFRICOM and Special Operations Command-Africa also could be moved to another location from Stuttgart, Wolters said. A decision on those moves has not been finalized.

Another decision that Pentagon leaders reached as a result of the review was to leave some 2,500 Air Force troops in the United Kingdom, instead of moving them to Germany as had long been planned.

The 100th Refueling Wing at RAF Mildenhall in Suffolk had been due to move to Ramstein Air Base in Germany in 2024 and the 352nd Special Operations Wing, which flies CV-22 Ospreys, was to go to Spangdahlem. Those moves had already been delayed over negotiations with Germany.

As part of its shifting troops in Europe, the Pentagon is also exploring U.S. presence in Poland, where it has regularly rotated troops through for

training in recent years. The Pentagon said it will rotate elements of the Army's newly reestablished V Corps in Poland to control Army and partner forces training across Europe.

Esper said he had determined removing the troops from Germany would accomplish several U.S. goals: enhancing deterrence of Russia, strengthening NATO, reassuring allies in Europe and improving flexibility of military forces in the region.

Esper said the review of American forces in Europe was sped up by Trump ordered the removal of U.S. troops from Germany last month. Other reviews of troops in regions across the globe are ongoing and could result in other changes in force postures around the world, he said.

Varying reasons for moves

Esper and other top military leaders said Wednesday that the decision to move forces in Europe was based on strategic objectives and strengthening NATO relationships. But at the White House, Trump almost simultaneously offered his own view: It was meant to punish Germany.

"We're reducing the force because they're not paying their bills," Trump said Wednesday of Germany. "It's very simple, they're delinquent."

The president has long insisted Germany owes NATO billions of dollars, a misrepresentation of how funding for the alliance works. He repeated the claim Wednesday.

NATO nations contribute each year to the alliance's roughly \$2.5 billion annual budget, with the United States and Germany each to contribute about 16% of that budget this year. But Trump has targeted allies for failing to spend 2% of their gross domestic product on their own defenses. In 2014, NATO members agreed to reach that benchmark by 2024, though the agreement laid out no penalties for failing to reach that mark.

Germany in fiscal year 2019 spent about 1.36% of its GDP on defense, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel said her nation would reach that 2% target by the early 2030s, drawing Trump's ire.

Esper also urged Germany to ramp up defense spending.

"I think Germany is the wealthiest country in Europe," Esper said Wednesday. "Germany can and should pay more to its defense. It can and should meet its 2% standard. And it can go beyond that."

Only nine of 30 NATO nations spend 2% GDP on defense, according to the alliance. Neither Italy nor Belgium, where troops will move from Germany, have reached that benchmark.

The United States far outpaces its allies in defense spending, spending about 3.4% of its 2019 GDP on defense. But America also spends significantly more money on its military than any other nation in the world.

The Pentagon's plan could face challenges from Congress, where Republicans and Democrats have expressed concerns. The current version of the House-passed 2021 National Defense Authorization Act would forbid the Pentagon from moving troops out of Germany without certifying six months in advance that the relocation would not impact national security. The Senate's version of the bill, which sets annual Pentagon spending and policy requirements, does not include such a measure. The bills will be rectified if their differences in the coming months before they are voted on by both chambers.

Among those expressing concerns about the plan in recent days are former top commanders in Europe, including retired Adm. James Stavridis, a former EUCOM commander, and retired Lt. Gen. Ben Hodges, who lead U.S. Army-Europe. They have criticized the idea as a benefit for Russia.

Another former top U.S. Army-Europe commander, retired Lt. Gen. Mark Hertling took to Twitter on Wednesday to implore Congress to "stop it."

"The Headquarters in Stuttgart — both EUCOM and AFRICOM — will take billions of dollars to move, and will disrupt those [headquarters] in their operation," he tweeted. "AFRICOM location is 'to be determined' because there is no valid answer [and] consolidating EUCOM [with NATO] in Belgium will be challenging."

Stars and Stripes reporter John Vandiver contributed to this report.

Proposed drawdown in Germany

The Pentagon is planning to move troops from several bases in Germany to the United States and to other countries in Europe.



ANDREA VILLARI/Stars and Stripes

Vilseck, Stuttgart, Spangdahlem face big cuts

The Defense Department will remove about 11,900 troops from Germany, sending about 6,400 service members home to the United States and roughly 5,600 to other locations in Europe. Here are some of the moves announced by Defense Secretary Mark Esper on Wednesday:

- U.S. European Command and U.S. Special Operations Command-Europe to move from Stuttgart to Mons, Belgium. This would involve about 1,500 military personnel. Plans also call for eventually moving U.S. Africa Command in Stuttgart, but a location was not named Wednesday. AFRICOM has about 1,400 troops and civilians assigned to it.

- The 480th Fighter Squadron, an Air Force F-16 unit, at Spangdahlem Air Base to move to Aviano Air Base in Italy. There are roughly 4,000 airmen at the base, but it wasn't clear how many will move to Italy.

- The Army's 2nd Cavalry Regiment, about 4,500 troops, from Vilseck to an unnamed location in the United States.

- Three unnamed brigade-size headquarters, an air defense artillery battalion, and an engineering battalion in Germany to move to Belgium. This could be a reference to aviation and air defense units that are based in the Bavaria region and includes several thousand troops.

- The Air Force 100th Refueling Wing at RAF Mildenhall in the United Kingdom had been scheduled to move to Ramstein Air Base, Germany in 2024. The Air Force 352nd Special Operations Wing, including CV-22 Ospreys, also at RAF Mildenhall had been scheduled to go to Spangdahlem in 2024. These units, about 2,500 airmen, will now stay in the U.K.

— STARS AND STRIPES



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MILITARY

Trump hasn't spoken to Putin on alleged bounties

By JOHN WAGNER
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said in an interview broadcast Wednesday that he has not spoken to Russian President Vladimir Putin about U.S. intelligence reports of Russian bounties given to Taliban-linked militants to kill U.S. and coalition forces in Afghanistan.

"I have never discussed it with him, no," Trump said during a taping of "Axios on HBO." He said he did not bring up the issue during his most recent conversation with Putin last week, which Trump said was "a phone call to discuss other things."

The Trump administration in

recent weeks has questioned the veracity of the intelligence. But some of Trump's own senior intelligence officials viewed the information as credible enough to warn the Pentagon and allies so they could ensure they had measures in place to protect their forces in Afghanistan and to begin developing options for responding to such a Russian operation, national security adviser Robert C. O'Brien said earlier this month.

During the interview, Trump continued to cast doubt on the intelligence, saying, "Frankly, that's an issue that many people said was fake news."

Pressed by Axios's Jonathan

Swan on whether he believes the intelligence, Trump did not answer directly.

"You know, it's interesting," Trump said. "Nobody brings up China. They always bring Russia, Russia, Russia."

When reports of the possible bounties emerged last month, Democrats seized on Trump's reluctance to take action as another sign of an unwillingness to challenge Putin — a charge that gained currency in the wake of Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.

During the interview, Trump stressed that he was not orally briefed on the intelligence about possible Russian bounties.

"It never reached my desk," Trump said. "You know why? ... Intelligence didn't think it was real ... If it reached my desk, I would have done something about it."

Trump did not respond directly to a question about news reports that the intelligence was included in a written briefing. In response to a question from Swan, Trump said he reads his written briefings.

"They like to say I don't read. I read a lot," Trump said.

He said that "a lot of people," including some foreign policy officials from the administration of President George W. Bush, were convinced that the intelligence

was not real.

Trump also pressed his frequent argument that there are opportunities to improve U.S.-Russian relations.

"If we can do something with Russia, in terms of nuclear proliferation, which is a very big problem — bigger problem than global warming, a much bigger problem than global warming in terms of the real world, that would be a great thing," Trump said.

Administration officials said earlier this month that the White House was not planning an immediate response to intelligence reports of Russian bounties because Trump does not believe the reports are true or "actionable."

DC National Guard officer rebukes police accounts of White House protest

By STEVE BEYNON
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — An Army officer for the National Guard told House lawmakers Tuesday that protesters at Lafayette Square last month were subjected to excessive use of force by police prior to President Donald Trump's photo opportunity at a church across the street.

"The events I witnessed at Lafayette Square on the evening of June 1 were deeply disturbing to me, and to fellow National Guardsmen," said Maj. Adam DeMarco, a member of the District of Columbia National Guard and an Iraq War veteran. "Having served in a combat zone, and understanding how to assess threat environments, at no time did I feel threatened by the protesters or assess them to be violent."

Last month, Lafayette Square became a focal point of protests in cities across the country expressing outrage for the death of a handcuffed Black man, George Floyd, at the hands of a white police officer. To clear the park, police used smoke grenades and flashbangs, fired rubber bullets into the crowd and attacked protesters with batons and riot shields.

On Tuesday, Democratic members of the House Committee on Natural Resources pressed DeMarco and acting Chief Gregory Monahan of the Park Police on whether the use of weapons by police was a political tool by Trump to allow him to take a photo in front of the historic St. John's Episcopal Church.

"I firmly believe what happened in Lafayette Square was a consequence to create a photo opportunity for President Trump," said Rep. Raul Grijalva, D-Ariz., the committee chairman.

DeMarco's statements to the House committee about the incident contradicted the depiction from White House and law enforcement officials about the protests.

"From my observation, those demonstrators — our fellow American citizens — were en-

gaged in the peaceful expression of their First Amendment rights," he said.

But Monahan offered a different account to committee members.

He said protesters at Lafayette Square were armed with "bricks, rocks, caustic liquids, water bottles, lit flares, fireworks and 2x4 sections of wood." However, no officers were injured during the day before police moved protesters out of the square, he added.

Monahan also denied that the actions of Park Police using aggressive tactics to clear the area had anything to do with clearing a path for Trump to walk across the street. He did say, however, that he knew Trump was going to visit Lafayette Park amid the protests. Police cleared the protesters from the area about 30 minutes before Trump and his entourage walked to the church. But Monahan asserted Tuesday that he did not know when the White House planned to move across Lafayette Square.

"We were notified earlier in the day that the president was going to visit Lafayette Park to view the damage that was done to the park over the course of the preceding days, but we were not given a time on when he was visiting," he told House lawmakers.

Monahan also denied that police pushing or beating protesters or firing less-than-lethal munitions at the crowd was directed by the White House. Normally there would be a digital recording of radio communications, but records between police and Secret Service do not exist due to a technical failure, Monahan said.

House lawmakers are now demanding the written logs of all Park Police communications from that day.

DeMarco said the National Guard troops were taken by surprise by police attacking protesters. He said he never felt like he was in danger and there were no indications of violence that day. He said the crowd was largely under control ahead of the advance by police, calling actions by law enforcement an "ineffective



BILL CLARK/AP

National Guard Maj. Adam DeMarco arrives to testify during a House Natural Resources Committee hearing on actions taken on June 1 at Lafayette Square on Tuesday at Capitol Hill.

way to deescalate the situation."

Monahan said 50 Park Police were injured during the days leading up to June 1. One officer was injured once they advanced on protesters in Lafayette Park.

House lawmakers pressed Monahan repeatedly for two hours for an explanation on why police cleared the area ahead of Trump's photo-op. Monahan said police needed to clear the area so a fence could be built around the White House to expand security. He offered no explanation, however, about why police used aggressive tactics roughly 30 minutes before D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser's curfew went into effect. Monahan did not cite a triggering event.

Rep. Ruben Gallego, D-Ariz., a former Marine, said the police

acted unprofessionally.

"Deescalating the violence does not mean sending in men swinging batons and using ... gas, it doesn't make any sense," he said. "No one was injured until

you advanced, it makes no sense ... If I acted this way when I was in the Marine Corps, I probably would've been busted down [in rank]."

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VETERANS/MILITARY

IG report: Doctor, hospital failed in helping suicidal vet

By NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A veteran battling opioid withdrawal and suicidal thoughts begged to stay at the Washington veterans hospital one night in early 2019. Instead, a doctor had the veteran escorted out by police and said the patient could “go shoot [themselves]. I do not care.”

Six days later, the veteran died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

The incident was the subject of an investigative report released Tuesday by the VA Office of Inspector General. The IG's office deemed the doctor's behavior as misconduct and patient abuse. The report does not identify the doctor or patient and omitted identifying factors, such as gender.

Besides the doctor's comments, the Washington DC VA Medical Center failed in other ways to help the veteran, according to the report. Staff failed to complete suicide prevention planning because the patient was discharged. They didn't correctly assess the veteran's risk of suicide and they shuffled the patient between seven doctors during a 12-hour

period.

Two VA police officers and one physician assistant heard the doctor say, “I do not care,” regarding whether the veteran killed themselves. None of the witnesses reported the comments. Though the VA requires leaders to report professional misconduct to the state licensing board, that wasn't done in this case, either, the inspector general's report stated.

The doctor continued to treat patients for nine more months before being fired. At that point, there had been two more allegations of verbal misconduct against them.

“Failure to follow VA and facility policy in response to incidents of employee misconduct and patient abuse undermines the public interest and continued risk to VA patients and staff,” the report states.

The veteran, who was in his or her 60s, was brought to the Washington hospital by a family member. The patient had a long history of dependence on opioids and had recently run out of pain medication. The veteran was unable to sleep, had anxiety and panic attacks, and reported suicidal thoughts.

“The patient described not

sleeping for four days following discontinuation of medicine, ‘terrible’ appetite and concentration, and feelings of hopelessness and helplessness,” the IG's office wrote in the report. “The outpatient psychiatrist documented that the patient was ‘worried about going home and would feel suicidal if not admitted for detox.’”

Though the veteran said he or she had experienced suicidal thoughts every day for the previous two weeks, a psychiatry resident said the patient didn't meet the criteria for being admitted as an inpatient. The resident recommended the veteran be discharged and return to the mental health clinic the following morning.

When told of this plan, the veteran refused to leave. Another doctor — the one who would later be fired for misconduct — said the patient was “ranting.” The doctor called VA police to escort the veteran from the emergency department and told the front desk, the triage nurse and VA security not to readmit the patient that night.

The veteran left about 11 p.m. The following morning, the veteran didn't show for the mental



ARTHUR MONDOL/DOO

The behavior of a doctor at the Washington VA Medical Center was deemed as misconduct and patient abuse in an Inspector General's report about an incident last year.

health appointment.

A family member later called the hospital to inform staff that the veteran had died by suicide six days after leaving the emergency room.

The IG's office made 11 recommendations to the hospital. Michael Heimall, director of the facility, agreed with all of them and he said they would be implemented by the end of 2020. In a written response to the inspector general, Heimall said the hospital had instituted an educational program for emergency room staff to understand the VA's suicide prevention policies.

The Washington hospital, which treats about 81,000 veterans in the metropolitan area, has recently been criticized by the IG's office. In 2018, the IG said a culture of

complacency at the medical facility allowed widespread failures to persist for years, putting veterans at risk and weakening core functions of the hospital.

Since the 2018 report, the facility has come under new leadership, and top VA officials have insisted widespread changes have been made. Though the issues in 2018 were different than the latest findings, the IG's office said there's still a problem with hospital leaders being slow to respond.

“The issue of facility leaders not taking immediate action upon learning of significant concerns remains relevant,” inspectors wrote.

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Va. senator pushes to keep renaming bases in NDAA

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Sen. Tim Kaine on Tuesday urged other lawmakers not to cave to President Donald Trump's demands to remove a measure from the annual defense authorization bill that would strip the Confederate names from 10 Army posts.

The Virginia Democrat called the provision to rename those installations a negligible issue among others in the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act, versions of which were passed last week by overwhelming majorities in the Senate and the House. Kaine's plea came after Trump threatened a veto of the legislation, which sets annual Pentagon policy and spending priorities, and tweeted Sen. Jim Inhofe, R-Okla., assured him the base renaming measures would be stripped from the final version of the NDAA.

“We should not be playing ‘Mother May I’ with the president,” Kaine said during a hearing of the Senate Armed Service Committee to examine nominees for two key four-star military commands. “We should do what we're going to do. And then we should let the president do what the president's going to do. But I don't think we should let a minor issue dominate and slow down this bill.”

Kaine's appeal was echoed Tuesday by two other Democrats on the committee, Alabama's Sen. Doug Jones and Sen. Tammy Duckworth of Illinois. The trio pointed to critical measures in both versions of the bill aimed at improving U.S.



ANDREW HARRIN/AP

Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va., is urging lawmakers to keep the NDAA provision that would strip Confederate names from some Army posts.

national security, including a 3% pay boost for troops, growing the size of the military and investing in new ships, airplanes and other modern weapons.

Kaine did not solicit the opinions on the issue of either general who testified Tuesday. Those generals, Air Force Lt. Gen. Glen VanHerck and Army Lt. Gen. James Dickinson, received seemingly universal

support from the committee and they are expected to be confirmed easily to serve as commanders of U.S. Northern Command and U.S. Space Command, respectively. Dickinson would be the first Army officer to lead the Pentagon's top space operations command.

The Senate and the House last week passed separate versions of the NDAA, both of which called for the renaming of the 10 southern Army posts named during the Jim Crow era of the early 1900s for Confederate generals from the Civil War. The Senate's version gives the Army three years to study the issue and change the names, while the House version would force name changes in one year. Both chambers passed their versions of the bill by more than a two-thirds majority, which would be needed by both legislative bodies to override a presidential veto. Negotiators from both chambers will now spend the coming months working to reconcile differences in their versions of the legislation.

Inhofe, chairman of the Senate Armed Service Committee, has repeatedly voiced his opposition to use legislation to force the Army to change the names of the installations in question. They are Camp Beauregard and Fort Polk in Louisiana; Fort Benning and Fort Gordon in Georgia; Fort Bragg in North Carolina; Fort A.P. Hill, Fort Lee and Fort Pickett in Virginia; Fort Rucker in Alabama, and Fort Hood in Texas.

On Tuesday, he defended his position, saying he agreed with Trump that efforts to strip the names equate to attempts to change U.S. history.

“Now, I was stationed many years ago in Fort Lee, Va.,” said Inhofe, an Army veteran. “So, I have a little bit of personal background in that. I think there are a lot of people who just legitimately don't want to disregard the history of this country as it actually happened. And, that's a legitimate concern.”

Trump argued last week that renaming those installations dishonored World War I and II veterans who trained at those posts before deploying overseas. He has said previously the installations would never be renamed while he was president.

But Duckworth offered her own take on the issue, having spent time at Fort Rucker, where she learned to fly helicopters.

“I love Fort Rucker [and] ... I had some wonderful times there,” said Duckworth, a retired Army lieutenant colonel who lost both of her legs while flying UH-60 Black Hawks in Iraq. “But I certainly did not appreciate being posted to a base named for a traitor who raised arms against our nation.”

Jones said he saw renaming the posts — including Fort Rucker in his state — as a serious issue, which should remain in the final version of the bill, even if Trump's veto threat stands.

“If the president wants to continue to be on the wrong side of history on that point, then that's his prerogative,” he said. “But this committee, as well as the Senate of the United States and the House of Representatives have decided they are going to be on the right side of history on this.”

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MILITARY

Iran: Drill is meant to send message to the US

FROM FRONT PAGE

Separately, drones targeted the bridge of the fake aircraft carrier, according to the state TV report. The broadcaster did not immediately air footage of the launches or the drone attack, nor did it identify the missiles used in the drill.

However, the drill clearly meant to send a message to the United States.

A semiofficial news agency close to the Guard published a graphic overnight that photo-shopped the image of an American carrier into the shape of a casket with a set of crosshairs on it, with a caption quoting Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei pledging to seek revenge for the U.S. drone strike that killed a top Iranian general in January.

The drill — and the American response to it — underlined the lingering threat of military conflict between Iran and the U.S. after a series of escalating incidents last year led to the January drone strike. Tehran responded to that strike by firing ballistic missiles that wounded dozens of American forces in Iraq.

While the coronavirus pandemic has engulfed both Iran and the U.S. for months, there has been a growing confrontation as America argues to extend a yearlong U.N. weapons embargo on Tehran that is due to expire in October. A recent incident over Syria involving an American jet fighter approaching an Iranian passenger plane also has renewed tensions.

Iranian commandos fast-rope

down from a helicopter onto the replica in the footage aired Tuesday from the exercise called “Great Prophet 14.” Anti-aircraft guns opened fire on a target drone near the port city of Bandar Abbas.

State television footage also showed a variety of missiles being fired from fast boats, trucks, mobile launchers and a helicopter, some targeting the fake carrier. A commander said the Guard, a force answerable only to Khamenei, planned to fire “long-range ballistic missiles” as well during the drill that continued Wednesday.

Ballistic missile fire detected from the drill resulted in American troops being put on alert at Al-Dhafra Air Base in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates and Al-Udeid Air Base, the forward headquarters of the U.S. military’s Central Command in Qatar, the military said. Troops sought cover during that time.

“The incident lasted for a matter of minutes and an all clear was declared after the threat ... had passed,” said U.S. Army Maj. Beth Riordan, a Central Command spokeswoman.

Both bases are hundreds of miles away from where Iran put the replica aircraft carrier.

Al-Dhafra also is temporarily home to five French-built Rafale fighter jets on their way to India for that country’s air force.

Other footage from the exercise aired by Iran’s state television showed fast boats encircling the mock-up carrier, kicking up white waves in their wake. While



SEPAHNEWS/AP

In this photo released Tuesday by Sepahnews, Revolutionary Guard’s speed boats circle a replica aircraft carrier during a military exercise. The drill appears aimed at threatening the U.S. amid tensions between Tehran and Washington.

Iran’s naval forces are dwarfed by the U.S. Navy, its commanders practice so-called “swarm” tactics aimed at overwhelming the U.S. carriers that pass through the strait on their way in and out of the Persian Gulf.

It wasn’t immediately clear if

all the footage was from Tuesday, as one overhead surveillance image that appeared to be shot by a drone bore Monday’s date. The exercise had been expected as satellite photos released Monday showed the fake carrier being

moved into place by a tugboat.

A black-and-white satellite photo taken Tuesday by Colorado-based firm Maxar Technologies showed damage to the replica’s bow and several of its fake jet fighters.

GOP virus bill replaces money for Pentagon projects taken for wall

By KARA WERNER

AND KAROUN DEMIRJIAN

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The GOP Senate’s new \$1 trillion coronavirus stimulus bill restores hundreds of millions of dollars in Pentagon spending that the Trump administration redirected to help pay for President Donald Trump’s border wall.

Navy planes and ships and Air Force aircraft that the Trump administration canceled earlier this year so the money could go to pay for the wall have reappeared in the GOP bill that was introduced Monday. The programs are part of a \$30 billion increase in spending in the GOP bill that Democrats are already objecting to. Republicans are defending the spending as important to protect jobs and help the Pentagon cope with impacts of coronavirus.

The Trump administration’s move to “reprogram” Pentagon money to build Trump’s promised wall along the U.S.-Mexico

border has been a long-running dispute between the administration and Congress. Lawmakers of both parties have objected, but the administration contends it can move the Pentagon’s money without congressional approval.

Now Senate Republicans, led by Appropriations Chairman Richard C. Shelby, R-Ala., have taken the opportunity presented by the coronavirus stimulus bill to restore spending on some of the programs they deemed most critical — although Democratic objections make it uncertain whether the spending will make it into any final bill.

In one example, the administration sought to zero out a \$261 million account for the Navy’s Expeditionary Fast Transport ship. The coronavirus bill puts \$260 million back into this program. The ship is built by Austal USA, which is based in Shelby’s home state of Alabama.

The administration’s reprogramming notice also took money from the budget for the Navy’s

P-8A Poseidon aircraft by \$180 million, saying there were already enough planes and describing it as a “congressional special interest item.” The COVID bill puts more than \$1 billion into the P-8A program.

The Trump administration reprogramming notice also redirected \$365 million from the Air Force’s C-130J Aircraft program. The coronavirus bill puts \$720 million back into that program.

Another Air Force program, for the F-35 aircraft, was also targeted for a \$156 million cut by the Trump administration earlier this year. The coronavirus bill includes \$686 million for additional F-35As.

Apart from the money aimed at restoring programs cut to pay for the wall, the Pentagon spending in the coronavirus bill includes money for an array of other weapons systems, as well as money to help the Pentagon defray costs related to the coronavirus.

AFRICOM helps rescue migrants off Libya coast

By JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — A U.S. Africa Command unit on a surveillance mission off the coast of Libya helped rescue 131 migrants after picking up their distress signal at sea, the military said this week.

“Our routine surveillance along the North Africa Coast gave us an opportunity to lend a helping hand,” said AFRICOM’s Gen. Stephen Townsend in a statement Tuesday.

The migrants were stranded in the Mediterranean Sea, some 40 miles northwest of Misrata, Libya, on a raft that was deflating, AFRICOM said.

After picking up their distress signal via radio, U.S. Air Forces Africa coordinated with Libyan and Maltese naval authorities for the rescue operation on July 21, AFRICOM said.

The European Border and Coast Guard Agency reported the Libyan Coast Guard rescued all

131 passengers and brought them to safety, AFRICOM said.

“International partnership remains important to addressing mutual challenges,” Townsend said. “In this case, collective contributions helped save lives.”

The rescue operation was done in coordination with U.S. European Command, also based in Stuttgart, Germany.

AFRICOM did not disclose what unit was performing a surveillance mission in the area, but unmanned U.S. aircraft have been active in and around Libya.

In recent weeks, AFRICOM has particularly been focused on gathering intelligence connected to Russian operations in the North African country, where AFRICOM has accused Moscow of sending fighter planes, and laying land mines and other booby traps to prop up a militia fighting against the U.S.-backed government in Tripoli.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Okinawa Marines report no new cases, USAF adds 1

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The Air Force on Okinawa announced one new coronavirus case Tuesday night, bringing the total number affiliated with the U.S. military at Kadena Air Base in July to five, according to a post on the base Facebook page.

Meanwhile, the Marine Corps for a second day this week reported no new coronavirus cases Wednesday on Okinawa. The Marines after the July Fourth weekend have reported sometimes dozens of new cases daily arising out of two cluster outbreaks at Camp Hansen and Marine Corps Air Station Futenma.

Kadena's 18th Wing said the new patient was placed in isolation, but did not specify whether it is a service member, civilian or family member.

"Our public health team has completed contact tracing, and individuals identified as close contacts are now in quarantine,"



U.S. Air Force

U.S. personnel new to Okinawa arrive at Kadena Air Base in this photo posted to the 18th Wing's Facebook page on Monday.

the statement said.

The base has also reported two positive cases among its Japanese employees so far this month.

Okinawa prefecture on Wednesday reported 44 new cases in the community, the most announced in a single day since the pandemic

began, according to a prefectural spokesman.

After a two-month stretch without a new infection, the number of

local cases on the island has risen to 133 since July 8. Okinawa has reported 276 cases since the pandemic began.

A prefectural health official on Tuesday implored U.S. service members and their families to stay on their installations as the number of local cases continues to climb. The official also urged tourists to avoid the island for the time being.

Kadena in the Facebook post promised to work closely with local public health officials and to be transparent to ensure the safety and well-being of U.S. forces on the island and members of the off-base community.

So far this month, the U.S. military on Okinawa has announced 236 coronavirus cases. Camp Hansen reported 118 infections, MCAS Futenma reported 109, Kadena reported five and Camps Foster, Courtney, Kinser and McTureous each reported one.

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8 Thai soldiers test positive after training in Hawaii

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — Eight Thai soldiers who participated in a large Army exercise in Hawaii this month tested positive for the coronavirus after returning home last week, according to media reports.

The infected individuals were among a company of 133 Thai Royal soldiers who participated in the Lightning Forge exercise on Oahu that ran July 7-21.

About 5,500 soldiers with the U.S. Army's 25th Infantry Division participated in the exercise, which was the division's first large-scale training since the coronavirus pandemic hit in the spring.

A 25th Infantry Division spokesman on Tuesday declined to say whether any U.S. soldiers involved in the training had tested positive, citing Defense Department policy.

Hawaii had 1,757 confirmed coronavirus cases as of Tuesday — the majority on Oahu — with 26 deaths.

The Bangkok Post newspaper reported Tuesday that the Thai government confirmed two soldiers, ages 22 and 25, were hospitalized for COVID-19, the respiratory disease caused by the virus. The pair began showing symptoms Friday, with the younger soldier having a fever, breathing difficulties and diarrhea, while the older one developed a cough, the newspaper said.

The government had earlier confirmed that six other soldiers had tested positive for the virus after returning to Thailand on July 22, according to the report. All the infected soldiers had been on the same flight home from Hawaii.

The entire company of soldiers had been placed in a state-run quarantine facility upon their return, the newspaper said.

"We understand that reports of possible COVID-19 cases in Hawaii are concerning, and in accordance with Defense Department policy, we continue to share all available information within Hawaii public health channels to ensure the local community remains safe and any appropriate measures are taken to reduce the

spread," Lt. Col. Adam Hallmark, a 25th Infantry Division spokesman, said in a statement emailed Tuesday to Stars and Stripes.

The day before the exercise was to end July 21, however, another division spokesperson told Stars and Stripes that no soldier had at that time tested positive for the virus.

On Tuesday, Hallmark said: "We are evaluating the force health protection measures that were put in place during Lightning Forge and have implemented contact tracing and increased testing among our soldiers to help determine the overall health assessment of our forces following the exercise."

"We are committed to determining the facts and improving

our processes to ensure the safety of all participants in any future training exercise," he said.

"The outbreak of COVID-19 during joint training apparently will not slow down future engagements."

"Our need to maintain a mission-ready force remains more important than ever, and we cannot afford to simply wait for COVID-19 to go away," Hallmark said. "Part of the demand for maintaining mission readiness requires training with our partners and allies. Thailand is a key partner and our most enduring ally in Asia. Our broad cooperation benefits both our countries, the region and beyond."

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Japan's case count hits 1-day record as US military cases there decline

By JOSEPH DITZLER
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — A coronavirus surge in Japan set a new one-day record Wednesday of 1,000 new cases while the number of active cases among the U.S. military there has begun to fall.

Japanese media reported new infections in Osaka, Aichi and Okinawa prefectures, according to public broadcaster NHK. Osaka reported 221 cases, exceeding 200 in one day for the first time.

Japan celebrated a four-day holiday over the past weekend, although authorities in places like Tokyo urged citizens to refrain from traveling beyond prefectural borders.

Tokyo reported 250 cases

Wednesday, its second consecutive day over 200, according to the Japan Times, citing the Metropolitan Tokyo Government.

Osaka and central Tokyo are off limits to U.S. military personnel as part of measures aimed at curbing the virus' spread, although authorities have eased other travel restrictions around Japan.

Okinawa recorded 44 cases Wednesday, another record among its population of about 1.5 million. About 80,000 U.S. troops, Defense Department civilians and family members are living on the island.

Meanwhile, the number of active cases among U.S. service members, civilian employees and family members across Japan has fallen to 139, down 50

over the past five days, Lt. Gen. Kevin Schneider, commander of U.S. Forces Japan, told reporters Wednesday.

Schneider said the U.S. armed forces are encouraging its personnel and their families coming to Japan on new assignments to arrive via Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo rather than the major airports in the Tokyo area, Narita and Haneda.

"I want to continue to message to our personnel in U.S. Forces Japan that this is serious business," he said during a press call, "that we cannot be complacent and we cannot lower our guard, and that it does not take much for COVID-19 to be introduced to our bases."

U.S. Army Japan, headquartered at Camp Zama in Kanagawa

prefecture southeast of central Tokyo, on Wednesday reported four new virus cases.

The first, assigned to western Japan, tested positive at a Japanese hospital Tuesday after falling ill over the weekend, according to a news release. The individual was isolated and must show up negative on two tests before being released.

Two others tested positive upon their arrival in the country Tuesday, a separate news release said. They were tested by Japanese authorities following "international travel" and quarantined at Camp Zama.

The Army did not specify which airport the pair flew into, where they arrived from or their status — service members, Defense Department civilian employees,

contractors or family members.

The third individual was diagnosed with the virus Wednesday after falling ill and being tested Tuesday, the release said. That person, whom the Army did not further identify, was also isolated immediately.

"At no time did these individuals pose any risk to the community or installation," the Army said.

Schneider said Wednesday that he does not know how many people the U.S. military is sending to Japan, but he has asked the individual services to report those numbers back to him.

Stars and Stripes reporter Caitlin Doornbos contributed to this report.
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VIRUS OUTBREAK



JOHN MINCHILLO/AP

Pedestrians pass a storefront that's for rent as a neighboring business sells clothing Tuesday in the Corona neighborhood of the Queens borough of New York. Officials from across the U.S. say the Senate Republicans' proposed jobless benefit plan could delay payments for weeks or months.

States warn GOP's unemployment benefit plan could delay payments

By GEOFF MULVILL
Associated Press

A Republican proposal to slash the \$600 weekly benefit boost for those left jobless because of the coronavirus shutdown could result in weeks or even months of delayed payments in some states.

Older computer systems that took weeks to set up for the initial federal unemployment enhancement would need to be reprogrammed again twice under the GOP plan.

In Florida, state Rep. Anna Eskamani, a Democrat from Orlando, said the state has not even gotten the original supplemental benefit to everyone entitled to it.

"So the idea of changing the current process that has taken us months to put into place, that is still not even perfect, is a scary thought," she said.

"These changes, whatever they end up being, are going to create more bureaucratic layers for people to get the relief they need. Meanwhile we have bills to pay, we have to put food on the table, we have medical expenses and a lot of people are suffering."

How to handle unemployment is a fiercely contested part of the debate as Congress negotiates the latest relief legislation.

Democrats want to bring back the federally funded \$600-a-week unemployment bonus that is expiring, saying it's a way to keep families and the economy afloat in a time when there are far more people out of work than jobs available.

Republicans argue the current amount is so high that it encourages people to remain on unemployment. They want to reduce it in two steps: First, by cutting the benefit by two-thirds — to \$200 a week through September. Then they want to switch that flat rate to a percentage in which the unemployed would receive benefits equal to no more than 70% of their previous incomes in November and December.

The debate isn't only about the economy and ideology. It's also about what's doable technologically, especially on software many states use that dates to the 1970s.

Some states took a month to figure out how to process the initial \$600 a week benefit when it went into place this spring, leaving laid-off workers in the lurch as the numbers of unemployed skyrocketed. Last week, more than 16 million Americans were receiving unemployment benefits.

"Anything other than a flat rate would take time to program in our system because it would require individual income calculations for hundreds of thousands of Ohioans receiving unemployment ben-

'The idea of changing the current process that has taken us months to put into place, that is still not even perfect, is a scary thought.'

state Rep. Anna Eskamani
D-Fla.

efits," Bret Crow, a spokesman for the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, said in an email.

Washington was among the first states to implement the \$600 benefit boost. But Mike Faulk, a spokesman for Gov. Jay Inslee, a Democrat, said large-scale changes would slow down benefit payments and "put a significant burden on state unemployment agencies."

The state's employment security commissioner, Susan LeVine, wrote the state's congressional delegation this month telling them, "Simply put, state unemployment systems cannot flip a switch overnight on August 1, 2020, and will require a transition period."

In Louisiana, Gov. John Bel Edwards said he doesn't believe any states' unemployment systems could handle a variable federal benefit tied to a person's previous earnings. He has encouraged Louisiana's congressional delegation to back a flat unemployment benefit instead.

Annelies Goger, a fellow at the Brookings Institution, a left-of-center public policy organization, said even a change in the flat-rate boost could be delayed because states need to wait for federal guidance before implementing changes. Switching to a percentage of income would be even harder, she said.

For instance, it would be hard to gather the data needed to determine the previous incomes for people who were self-employed or were gig workers. Such workers are generally not eligible for unemployment benefits, but they are under coronavirus relief legislation.

And Goger said it would take a lot of resources to modify a program twice that is scheduled to end in December.

"Any resources diverted from getting through those delays will delay getting relief to families that are struggling to pay rent and put food on the table."

Deadline looms for DODEA parents to pick school option

By KIM GAMEL
AND MATTHEW KEELER
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — Students at Defense Department schools in South Korea will get portable plastic barriers to protect them from the coronavirus, but buses and classrooms will likely be near pre-pandemic capacity, officials told parents Wednesday.

At a town hall meeting, the Department of Defense Education Activity regional superintendent, school administrators and the garrison commander at Camp Humphreys provided information to parents to help them decide between virtual or in-class learning for their children, just hours ahead of a 6 p.m. deadline on Thursday to make the choice.

But the school officials also acknowledged they were still working on many aspects of the upcoming school year, which is supposed to start in less than a month.

"I feel like I'm in a holding pattern until we get the numbers on who is going to virtual school, and then again on the impact to my master schedule — do I have teachers that will be selected to the virtual school," said Erin Grazak, the principal of Humphreys High School.

Only 2-3% of parents have chosen virtual school, recent figures show, but the numbers were changing rapidly as the deadline neared. Jeff Arrington, superintendent of the Pacific West district that includes South Korea, said in an interview on the sidelines of Wednesday's meeting.

DODEA announced earlier this month that it would open all schools Aug. 24 while providing a virtual option for parents who feel uncomfortable about sending their children to a regular classroom.

On the eve of decision day, many parents were undecided about what route to take.

"I am still evaluating my options," said Jetta Allen, an interview after the town hall, which lasted more than an hour and was streamed on Facebook Live.

Allen's fourth grader has a disability, suffers from asthma and allergies, but is part of the gifted program.

"Last year was hard," she said. "It was really hard to meet his special education goals and get progress through the virtual setting, so ideally in-person would be best for his academic success."

Tough decisions

DODEA has spelled out general safety protocols for the new school year, but officials filled in some of the blanks on Wednesday to help parents decide.

The standard calls for frequent hand washing will be made, and staff and students will be provided with plastic barriers, DODEA officials said.

"We are having barriers manufactured for every student and the teachers," regional chief of staff Joel Grim said.

Students can carry the shields with them between classes to supplement Plexiglass shields on cafeteria tables and other common areas, he said.

In places like crowded hallways, where social distancing would be difficult, masks will be used, the officials said.

In response to a parent's concern that her child would damage or lose the plastic shield, Grim said they cost \$16 each and students would be told how important they are. Buses also emerged as a source of concern as there aren't enough on Camp Humphreys to ensure proper social distancing, the officials said.

Masks could lower the risk, garrison commander Col. Michael Twomey said.

"This is going to be one of the more challenging aspects," he said.

Teachers concerned

Some of the town hall attendees questioned how a new rule that requires parents to check children's temperatures and look for coronavirus symptoms before school would be enforced.

Many teachers and other staff have been on leave, but coronavirus planning groups would begin work on unresolved issues next week, Arrington said.

"As far as the number of students in the room, it will be just like it was before, minus the students who choose to take virtual learning instead of being in-person, and the classrooms are the same size," he said.

That's one of the factors that led the Federal Education Association, which represents the teachers, to urge parents to select the online option.

DODEA has issued guidance calling on school staff to "clean and disinfect surfaces" between classes, during lunch and after school.

The agency also said face masks won't be required when social distancing is possible.

"DODEA's plans are completely unrealistic," the union said. "We understand that educating a child at home, rather than in school, presents difficulties for many families. But the risks associated with in-person schooling are too great at this time."

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Some hard-hit states still resist mask rules

Potential for uptick in cases in the Midwest stirs alarms

Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. — The baseball season descended deeper into crisis Tuesday, states like Mississippi and South Carolina cast about for more hospital beds, and governors in some of the hardest-hit places staunchly resisted calls to require masks, despite confirmed cases of the coronavirus soaring.

Major League Baseball suspended the Miami Marlins' season through Sunday because of an outbreak that has spread to at least 15 of the team's players, and a series of games this week between the New York Yankees and Philadelphia Phillies was called off as a precaution.

States like Florida, Arizona and Texas are in dire condition, and the virus also has been spreading farther north in recent days, causing alarm among public health officials who fear states are not doing enough to avoid catastrophic outbreaks like those in the Sun Belt.

"We are watching very carefully California, Arizona, Texas, and most of Florida," President Donald Trump said at a news conference. "It's starting to head down to the right direction."

Florida, however, reported another one-day high for COVID-19 deaths, with 191, while Arizona recorded 104, and Arkansas had a daily record of 20.

While the White House has begun to feel cautiously optimistic that the resurgence has begun to stabilize in parts of the Southwest, fears are growing about the potential for a significant uptick in the Midwest, including Minnesota, Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana and Colorado, according to a Trump administration official who was authorized to publicly discuss private conversations.

It's fueled largely by a rise in cases among young adults, who have been hitting bars, restaurants and health clubs again.

Over the past two weeks, Wisconsin's rolling average number of new confirmed cases has increased by 31%. Minnesota reported its largest one-day case count Sunday, with more than 860 cases.

The virus is blamed for over 4.3 million confirmed infections and about 150,000 deaths in the U.S., according to the tally kept by Johns Hopkins University. Globally, more than 16.5 million people have been infected, and more than 655,000 have died. The numbers are thought to be higher because of limits on testing.

Republican governors in Tennessee, Mississippi, Missouri and South Carolina have all resisted calls to close bars and gyms or issue statewide mask requirements, though local officials have imposed some of their own restrictions.

"The reaction is that I'm disturbed. I'm disturbed by," said Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious-diseases expert. Those two efforts and other best practices would "prevent the resurgence that we've seen in some of the other Southern states."

In Mississippi, nine of the state's biggest hospitals have no open intensive care beds as of Monday, and officials are considering opening pop-up facilities. More than 24% of coronavirus tests have come back positive in Mississippi over the past week, the highest rate in the nation and triple the national average.

Republican Gov. Tate Reeves has gone so far as to argue that because mask-wearing has become political, a state-wide mandating could actually discourage people from cov-



THOMAS WELLS, NORTHEAST MISSISSIPPI DAILY JOURNAL/AP

Workers from Servpro disinfect Mugshots restaurant in Tupelo, Miss., on July 17 as the restaurant prepares to open for business. Governors in Mississippi, Tennessee, Missouri and South Carolina have resisted calls to close bars and gyms or issue statewide mask requirements.

"I know it's a hot topic, but if we can all just wear masks and really do right for a month, it would help a lot to try and slow this down in Mississippi. If we don't, it's not going to slow down."

Terry Sullivan
Fondren Fitness

ering their faces. Instead, he is requiring masks only in the most seriously stricken counties.

Terry Sullivan, general manager of Fondren Fitness in Jackson, said a statewide requirement would be "the right thing to do."

"I know it's a hot topic, but if we can all just wear masks and really do right for a month, it would help a lot to try and slow this down in Mississippi," he said. "If we don't, it's not going to slow down."

In Missouri, larger cities are growing rattled by a spike in cases after the state fully reopened. It reported another daily record in cases, with nearly 1,800. St. Louis is curtailing bar hours and reducing restaurant seating capacity starting Friday, and Kansas City may follow suit.

GOP Gov. Mike Parson has repeatedly refused to enact a statewide order requiring masks, citing relatively few cases in most of the state compared with hot spots in bigger cities.

Parson said last month that he didn't believe the governor has personal responsibility for any virus, and compared the illness that has killed over 1,200 people in his state to the flu. He said no one would expect him to take responsibility if someone were involved in an accident on a Missouri road.

The uncertainty has put restaurant owners in a difficult position.

Brian Schmitz, co-owner of The Bellwether and the Polite Society in St. Louis, closed the two restaurants temporarily after a guest expressed concerns Sunday that another diner recently made a social media post about testing positive for COVID-19. Schmitz said the buildings have been deep-cleaned and he's testing staff before reopening, and it's proving costly.

But "the stakes are higher than money," he said. "Money hurts, don't get me wrong. But we all work to live, not the other way around, and this puts that in stark contrast."

In Tennessee, the situation is precarious enough that Dr. Deborah Birx of the White House coronavirus task force traveled to Nashville to implore leaders to close bars and residents to wear masks. But Republican Gov. Bill Lee has vowed he won't shut down the economy again.

As of Tuesday, nearly 1,100 people were hospitalized with confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Tennessee, the highest seen there in the past two weeks. Intensive-care units are running at 86% capacity.

Nearly 70% of the state has issued some sort of mask mandate. However, enforcement has varied, with some officials hesitating to issue citations.

In Nashville, the city's famous honky tonks have seen large crowds despite a strict 10 p.m. curfew that began last week. Nursing homes in more than 70 counties have been forced to again forbid visitors.

In Oklahoma, Gov. Kevin Stitt returned to his office Monday after two weeks of isolating at home following a positive coronavirus test. It came on the same day the state reported over 1,400 new confirmed cases — the second consecutive day of record highs.

Hospitals looked to increase capacity. The Regional Medical Center in Orangeburg, S.C., began setting up tents outside for recovering patients.

"We saw an uptick, and we wanted to be ahead of it," said Dr. John Samies, the hospital's chief of medical staff.

In Georgia, 88% of critical care beds were taken Tuesday, tying the highest level since the pandemic began, though not all critical care patients have COVID-19.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott worried that the virus could spread even further after Hurricane Hanna over the weekend forced people to gather together indoors.

The storm pounded the Rio Grande Valley, where hospitals have been overwhelmed. "We're in a dire situation," Rio Grande City Mayor Joel Villarreal said. "If we continue on the same trajectory, countless more lives will be lost."

In Europe, rising infections in Spain and other countries are causing alarm, weeks after nations reopened borders to revive tourism.

"Let's be absolutely clear about what's happening in Europe, amongst some of our European friends," British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said. "I'm afraid you are starting to see in some places the signs of a second wave of the pandemic."

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Pecan Festival chopped due to COVID-19 spread

SC FLORENCE — Organizers for the annual South Carolina Pecan Festival said this year's gathering will be canceled to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

Organizers held off on canceling the festival for as long as possible to see if daily reported COVID-19 cases would decrease in the state, The Florence Morning News reported.

The event, originally scheduled for Nov. 6 this year, usually draws 50,000 people to downtown Florence.

"Our S.C. Pecan Festival committee plans to use this time to continue to work on preparations for our return in 2021, bolder and more vibrant than before," festival chairman George D. Jebaily said.

110-ton sculpture moves to new home

IA IOWA CITY — The owner of a 20-foot-tall, 110-ton limestone statue succeeded in a slow process recently of moving the sculpture across a street in Iowa City.

The statue, called "Man on a Bench," had gazed out over a nature preserve in Iowa City for five years. But the Cedar Rapids Gazette reported that after its sculptor and the property owner, Doug Paul, completed a land swap with the education organization ACT, the statue had to be moved across a street.

Stonemason JB Barnhouse oversaw the move with the help of crane and excavation companies. They detached 11 blocks of carved Indiana limestone that had been held together by stainless steel pins and managed to haul the statue to its new home, one block at a time.

Suspected drunken driver crashes into building

ND GRAND FORK — A suspected drunken driver crashed into a Grand Forks apartment building, punching a hole in the wall of a first-floor apartment bedroom and landing in the kitchen. The tenants fortunately were not home at the time of the crash.

Officials said the 2005 Kia van was still running when first responders arrived. A juvenile male was arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence, reckless driving and being an unqualified driver. He was not seriously injured, KVVY-TV reported.

Man injured during encounter with alligator

MS BRANDON — A man was injured during an encounter with an alligator near a Mississippi waterfront park where several other alligators have been removed this month, according to wildlife officials.

The man was swimming with a group in the Ross Barnett Reservoir near Lakeshore Park when an alligator was spotted nearby, according to Ricky Flynt, the Mis-



COLLEEN McGRATH, THE (HAGERSTOWN, Md.) HERALD-Mail/AP

Hanging on

A man uses a rope swing to jump into the water at the Antietam Creek near Sharpsburg, Md., earlier this week.

Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks' alligator program coordinator.

The group left the water, but later got back in after the alligator disappeared, Flynt said. The official said the alligator was likely waiting under a pier and swam between the man's legs when he reentered the water.

The man suffered three scratches and Wildlife Department employees returned to the area that night and captured and euthanized the alligator.

Officer shoots fleeing driver in leg after chase

FL JACKSONVILLE — A Jacksonville police officer in a Jacksonville shot a man in the leg after he fled from a vehicle involved in a high speed chase, officials said.

Officers had stopped the car for a red light violation when it sped away at speeds between 90 and 100 mph, Jacksonville Sheriff's Chief T.K. Waters said during a news conference.

The injured man was in stable condition, Waters said.

Waters said officers used "stop sticks" to eventually stop the fleeing vehicle. That's when the driver got out and ran, he said. An officer followed the man around a building and fired one shot. No one else was injured.

Nature preserve closed due to overuse, trash

IN WILLIAMSPORT — The Nature Conservancy closed a western Indiana nature

THE CENSUS

600

The distance in miles away a pet dog was found after it jumped out of a car window on a South Carolina highway. The dog named Belle escaped near Charleston on July 15, according to Tim Whitfield, whose 90-year-old mother owns Belle. Whitfield put out a call for help on Facebook after he bought the puppy for his mother after her dog of 16 years recently died. After nearly two weeks of searching, Whitfield learned that a car of Florida residents grabbed Belle out of traffic after spotting the animal while traveling through Charleston to Miami, WCIV-TV reported.

preserve that features dramatic walled canyons because visitors flocking to the scenic area have overused the site and trashed it with litter.

In early July, crews with the nonprofit organization put up chains and felled some trees to block the entrance to the Fall Creek Gorge Nature Preserve.

A section of the preserve had been in "heavy use" for years as a destination for hikers, said Dawn Slack, director of stewardship for The Nature Conservancy in Indiana.

Lately, whether driven by people looking to escape outside during the coronavirus pandemic or for some other reason, she said that traffic — and all that comes with that — had increased significantly.

Wright-designed home moved about 800 feet

IL GLENCOE — A suburban Chicago home designed by Frank Lloyd Wright was relocated about 800 feet down the road, a short move that's part of a local saga over the historic structure.

The one-story frame house known as the Booth Cottage was built in 1913 and designed by Wright as a temporary home for Sherman and Elizabeth Booth, according to Landmarks Illinois, a state historic preservation organization. Sherman Booth was an attorney and Elizabeth an influential suffragist.

The home was threatened with demolition last year after it was purchased by a couple who wanted to build a new home on the property, the Chicago Tribune reported.

The Glencoe Park District agreed to a 99-year land lease with the Glencoe Historical Society for a nearby park site, with the historical society paying \$1 per year in rent.

Nonprofit turning trashed bikes into art

MA METHUEN — A nonprofit that cleans trash from the Merrimack and other rivers in Massachusetts has figured out what to do with some of the many bicycles it fishes from the depths — turn them into works of art.

Using the imagination and ideas of volunteers for the Methuen-based Clean River Project, the bikes have been "upcycled," painted in bright colors and adorned with flowers.

"We get creative," Rocky Morrison, president of the organization, told The Eagle-Tribune.

The group asks for a donation of \$100 or more for the reconditioned bikes and all proceeds offset the project's operating costs.

So far, the river project has sold three bikes.

Officials investigate death, mutilation of cow

OR FOSSIL — Authorities are investigating the death and mutilation of another cow — this time, on rangeland in Eastern Oregon near Fossil.

The black Angus cow, a breeding animal worth about \$1,000, was found dead and mutilated with tongue, genitals and reproductive organs cut out, The Capital Press reported.

The cause of death is unknown. By the time authorities arrived, the animal had likely been dead a few days, past the window to perform a necropsy.

This isn't the first time David Hunt, owner of Hunt Ranch and a partner-producer for Painted Hills Natural Beef Inc., has lost an animal to mutilation. In December, he found a dead bull in the snow with its nose, lips, ears, tongue, tail and genitals removed and blood drained.

From wire reports

NATION

Oregon governor: US agents to start leaving Portland

Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — Federal agents who have clashed with protesters in Portland, Ore., will begin a “phased withdrawal” from Oregon’s largest city, Gov. Kate Brown said Wednesday.

Acting Homeland Security Secretary Chad Wolf said in a statement the plan negotiated with Brown over the last 24 hours includes a “robust presence” of Oregon State Police in downtown Portland.

“State and local law enforcement will begin securing properties and streets, especially those surrounding federal properties, that have been under nightly attack for the past two months,” Wolf said.

The agents will begin leaving the city’s downtown area on Thursday, Brown said.

Before departing Wednesday for a trip to Texas, President Donald Trump insisted federal troops would not leave Portland until local authorities “secured their city.”

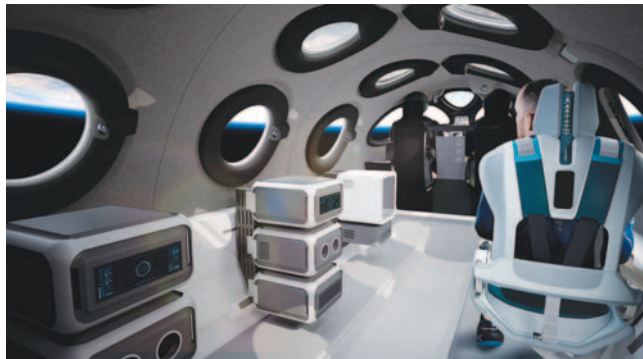
“Either they’re gonna clean up Portland soon, or the federal gov-

ernment is going up, and we’re gonna do it for them. So either they clean out Portland — the governor and the mayor, who are weak — either they clean out Portland or we’re going in to do it for them,” he said.

The U.S. Marshals Service and Department of Homeland Security had been weighing this week whether to send in more agents. The marshals were taking steps to identify up to 100 additional personnel who could go in case they were needed to relieve or supplement the deputy marshals who work in Oregon, spokesman Drew Wade said.

The nightly Portland protests began after George Floyd’s death at the hands of Minneapolis police and have grown to include the presence of federal agents.

Protesters have tried almost every night to tear down a fence erected to protect the building, set fires in the street and hurled fireworks, Molotov cocktails, bricks, rocks and bottles at the agents inside. Authorities this week reinforced the fence by putting concrete highway barriers around it.



VIRGIN GALACTIC/AP

The interior of Virgin Galactic’s SpaceshipTwo Cabin during a flight.

Spaceship’s interior gets preview

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Passengers flying Virgin Galactic on suborbital trips into space will be able to see themselves floating weightless against the backdrop of the Earth below while 16 cameras document the adventures, the company said Tuesday.

Highly detailed amenities to enhance the customer flight experience were shown in an online event revealing the cabin of the company’s rocket plane, a type called SpaceshipTwo, which is undergoing testing in preparation

for commercial service.

There are a dozen windows for viewing, seats that will be customized for each flight’s six passengers and capable of adjusting for G forces and, naturally, mood lighting.

Yet designer Jeremy Brown said the passengers’ most lasting impression may come from a large mirror at the rear of the cabin. “We think that there’s a real memory burn that customers are going to have when they see that analog reflection of themselves in the back of the cabin,

seeing themselves floating freely in space,” he said.

SpaceShipTwo is a rocket plane that is slung beneath a special jet airplane and released at high altitude.

After a moment of free fall, the two pilots ignite the rocket and the craft pitches up and accelerates vertically at supersonic speed. The rocket shuts down but momentum carries the craft into the lower reaches of space where it flips upside down so that the windows on the roof of the cabin give a view of the Earth far below.

Trump administration won’t accept new applications for DACA

By SOPHIA TAREEN
AND ELLIOT SPAGAT

Associated Press

CHICAGO — The Trump administration said Tuesday that it will reject new applications and shorten renewal periods for an Obama-era program that shields young people from deportation, taking a defiant stance after the U.S. Supreme Court refused to let it be scrapped completely.

The move, detailed in a memo from Acting Homeland Security Secretary Chad Wolf, ended a month of uncertainty about how the administration would respond to its Supreme Court defeat in an election year that has President Donald Trump looking for ways to energize his base.

Wolf said the administration may try to end the Deferred Ac-

tion for Childhood Arrivals program again, casting it as a law enforcement issue that could contribute to illegal immigration. He said the federal government needs more time to consider next steps, presenting the measures as a temporary change.

“DACA makes clear that, for certain large classes of individuals, DHS will at least tolerate, if not affirmatively sanction, their ongoing violation of the immigration laws,” Wolf wrote in the memo.

About 650,000 people are part of DACA, which allows young immigrants who were brought to the country illegally as children to work and shields them from deportation. Roughly 66,000 people meet age requirements to apply, according to the nonpartisan Migration Policy Institute.

The government will deny all new applications, limit renewals to one year instead of two and deny requests by DACA recipients to visit their home countries unless there are “exceptional circumstances.” Recipients may seek permission to return home for family events, such as funerals or weddings, and other reasons, though the Trump administration has generally denied them.

The Supreme Court ruled last month that Trump failed to follow rule-making procedures when he tried to end the program, but the justices kept a window open for him to try again.

The White House has been devising plans to make another push to end DACA, though it was not immediately clear whether he would make the politically sensitive move before Novem-

ber’s election. Democratic rival Joe Biden wants to keep DACA unconditionally.

A federal judge in Maryland ruled earlier this month that the program should be restored to its original form, but the administration was mum until Tuesday on whether it would start accepting new applications. The White House anticipates legal challenges.

The administration’s month-long silence had unnerved many DACA recipients and those who wanted to join. U.S. District Judge Paul Grimm of Maryland, an appointee of President Barack Obama, has given the administration until the end of Friday to update the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services’ website and start adequately explaining why applications are rejected.

Legal experts were skeptical of the Trump administration’s authority to roll back parts of the program.

“This is a move that is in defiance of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling and a federal court ruling,” said Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia, an immigration law professor at Penn State Law in University Park, Pennsylvania. “It’s a lawless landscape that we are in.”

Immigrant rights advocates blasted the move as cruel.

The Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition accused the administration of further marginalizing immigrants. The American Business Immigration Coalition called it economically harmful. And the American Civil Liberties Union vowed to continue its yearslong fight to prevent the program’s demise.



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NATION

US officials: Russia behind spread of virus disinformation

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Russian intelligence services are using a trio of English-language websites to spread disinformation about the coronavirus pandemic, seeking to exploit a crisis that America is struggling to contain ahead of the presidential election in November, U.S. officials said Tuesday.

Two Russians who have held senior roles in Moscow's military intelligence service known as the GRU have been identified as responsible for a disinformation effort meant to reach American and Western audiences, U.S. government officials said.

They spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly.

The information had previously been classified, but officials said it had been downgraded so they could more freely discuss it.

Officials said they were doing so now to sound the alarm about the particular websites and to expose what they say is a clear link between the sites and Russian intelligence.

Between late May and early July, one of the officials said, the websites singled out Tuesday published about 150 articles about the pandemic response, including

coverage aimed either at propping up Russia or denigrating the U.S.

Among the headlines that caught the attention of U.S. officials were "Russia's Counter COVID-19 Aid to America Advances Case for Detente," which suggested that Russia had given urgent and substantial aid to the U.S. to fight the pandemic, and "Beijing Believes COVID-19 is a Biological Weapon," which amplified statements by the Chinese.

The disclosure comes as the spread of disinformation, including by Russia, is an urgent concern heading into November's presidential election as U.S. officials look to avoid a repeat of the 2016 contest, when

a Russian troll farm launched a covert social media campaign to divide American public opinion and to favor then-candidate Donald Trump over Democratic opponent Hillary Clinton.

The U.S. government's chief counterintelligence executive warned in a rare public statement Friday about Russia's continued use of internet trolls to advance their goals.

Even apart from politics, the twin crises buffeting the country and much of the world — the pandemic and race relations and protests — have offered fertile territory for misinformation or outright falsehoods.

Report finds oligarchs skirting US sanctions through shady art sales

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Russian oligarchs have skirted U.S. sanctions through murky high-end art deals, according to a congressional report released Wednesday that urged lawmakers to rein in an unregulated industry favored by money launderers.

The secrecy of the art world — in which buyers often remain anonymous — gave billionaire friends of President Vladimir Putin access to the American economy even after the United States sanctioned them following Russia's 2014 annexation

of Crimea, the report found.

Investigators traced \$18 million in art buys to shell companies linked to Arkady and Boris Rotenberg, close Putin associates who American officials say benefited financially from the Crimean annexation.

The Senate's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations highlighted loopholes that exempt even the most lucrative art sales from financial safeguards aimed at stopping money laundering.

Major U.S. auction houses acknowledged never asking for the true identity of the buyer, the report found, dealing with an in-

termediary for the sales in question "even when it was well-known that the ultimate owner was someone else."

In all, the shell companies linked to the oligarchs moved at least \$91 million through the U.S. financial system after the sanctions were imposed, the report found.

"It is alarming and completely unacceptable that common sense regulations designed to prevent money laundering and the financing of terrorism do not apply if someone is purchasing a multimillion-dollar piece of art," said U.S. Sen. Tom Carper, of Delaware, the subcommittee's top

Democrat.

U.S. Sen. Rob Portman, Republican of Ohio, said he supports legislation to lift the "curtain of secrecy" that has made the art industry a preferred vehicle of money launderers.

The Rotenbergs could not be reached for comment. They have been the subject of U.S. sanctions since March 2014, singled out for their close ties to Putin. Arkady Rotenberg is a childhood friend and former judo sparring partner of Putin. His companies won billions in road contracts in Sochi, the host of the 2014 Winter Games.

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FACES

By GLENN WHIPP
Los Angeles Times

Even with the Emmys expanding the drama and comedy series categories to eight nominees and boosting the supporting acting races to eight as well, there are omissions. Surprises, too, but also crushing, demoralizing exclusions that leave a bitter taste in the mouth and a black cloud over the psyche.

We'll call them, for the sake of alliteration, "snubs," but they're mostly just a sign that there remains too much good television for voters to parse — even during these isolated times when we're stuck inside for too much of the day, wondering if anyone else is enjoying "Never Have I Ever" as much as we are.

So here we present the snubs and surprises of the 2020 Emmy nominations.

SURPRISE: Zendaya (lead actress, drama). Making it in ahead of Emmy winners Nicole Kidman, Viola Davis and Elizabeth Moss, the star of HBO's dark drama "Euphoria" pulled off the biggest surprise. Voters were spot-on in recognizing her haunting, unsettling work in the show. The former Disney star carried this uneven series with style and sensitivity to spare.

SNUB: "Ramy" (comedy series). Ramy Youssef picked up an acting nomination, with "Ramy" making history as the first Muslim American sitcom to earn Emmy recognition. Costmate Mahershala Ali joined him. Voters didn't recognize the show itself, a shocking omission for one of the best-reviewed comedies of the season.

SNUB: Rhea Seehorn (supporting actress, drama). What did Seehorn, arguably the most important cast member of one of television's best dramas, do to Emmy voters? Did nothing, to the detriment of a hotbed line at TV academy party. She overheard making some disparaging remark about puppy dogs and rainbows? Tell me! Please! What did she do? Because her consistent, controlled turn as attorney Kim Wexler in "Better Call Saul" has been a marvel for 50 episodes, and this past season gave her a few great, big moments, including a tearful, life-saving face-off with Lalo (Tony Dalton) in the penultimate episode.

SNUB: Reese Witherspoon (lead actress, drama; supporting actress, drama; lead actress; limited series/TV movie). You could argue that between "The Morning Show," "Big Little Lies" and "Little Fires Everywhere," no one had a better year than Reese Witherspoon. Maybe she had too much of a year? She also had to compete with her castmates — Jennifer

COMMENTARY

Emmys' biggest surprises and snubs

Aniston for "The Morning Show," Nicole Kidman in "Big Little Lies" and Kerry Washington in "Little Fires." She was every bit their equal, but perhaps voters just couldn't decide which spot to pick her.

SURPRISE: "The Mandalorian" (drama series). Never underestimate the power of Baby Yoda or the Child or, as I call this bundle of joy, the Light of My Life. "The Mandalorian" was everything fans wanted the last "Star Wars" trilogy to be, superbly crafted sci-fi that tapped into Lucasfilm lore and created its own vivid, Sergio Leone-inspired spaghetti western world. It absolutely belongs among the year's best drama series.

SNUB: "Big Little Lies" (drama series). OK, sure, the Bonnie storyline didn't work and there might have been competing visions for the show's direction, but the second season gave us plenty of juicy pleasures as well as powerful scenes examining the poisonous nature of denial. Plus, any series starring Nicole Kidman, Meryl Streep, Reese Witherspoon, Laura Dern, Shailene Woodley and Zoe Kravitz beats a show that takes its John Hughes references a little too seriously ("Stranger Things").

SURPRISE: "Insecure" (comedy series). Issa Rae, the star and co-creator of the excellent HBO comedy, earned a lead actress comedy nomination two years ago,

but, outside of two well-deserved cinematography nominations, that was it. So this series nomination comes as a pleasant surprise, an acknowledgment that a show depicting Black women finding love and struggling and succeeding can be powerful and worthy of attention. Plus, it's really funny.

SNUB: "Better Things" (comedy series). Pamela Adlon's inventive, beautifully observed comedy being omitted from an expanded comedy series category reminds me of this past Oscars, when voters ignored so many worthy films made by women. These groups are still male-dominated, and, sometimes, you can chalk up a lapse in judgment to demographics. Times television editor Matt Brennan tweeted not long ago that if "Better Things" had been made by a man, it would likely have won several Emmys by now. He's right. And Adlon not getting nominated for lead actress only makes this feel worse.

SURPRISE: Shira Haas, "Unorthodox" (lead actress, limited series/TV movie). To be clear, there could be no wrong choices in a category that also included Regina King ("Watchmen"), Cate Blanchett ("Mrs. America"), Reese Witherspoon and Kerry Washington ("Little Fires Everywhere"), Merritt Wever and Kaitlyn Dever ("Unbelievable") and Daisy Edgar-Jones

Rhea Seehorn, whose performance as attorney Kim Wexler is central to "Better Call Saul," wasn't recognized in the supporting actress category.

AMC/TNS

("Normal People"). Haas, playing a young woman escaping a Hasidic community in Brooklyn, went above and beyond for her art. On her first day of filming, she had to get partially nude for a scene in a mikveh and then, in the afternoon, she shaved her head. That was just the start of this demanding role.

SNUB: Viola Davis (lead actress, drama). I thought that voters would want to send the former Emmy winner out in style for the last season of "How to Get Away With Murder." But the lead actress drama category was packed with possibilities, so Davis' Emmy run as Annalise Keating ends at five noms, including a guest actress spot she did as the character on "Scandal."

SNUB: Daisy Edgar-Jones, "Normal People" (lead actress, limited series/TV movie). We understand if a grand, melancholy Irish romance — particularly between young people, whom Emmy voters seem to hate and resent — isn't everyone's ideal. Some people don't like black pudding and baked beans for breakfast, either. But there shouldn't be much debate about the worthiness of Edgar-Jones' achingly vulnerable work in the exquisite "Normal People." Right after we finish writing this, we're going to eat an entire pack of rashers in her honor.

New this week: Beyonce film, Alanis Morissette returns

Associated Press

Here's a collection curated by The Associated Press' entertainment journalists of what's arriving on TV, streaming services and music platforms this week.

Movies

"Black Is King": Written, directed and executive produced by Beyonce, the pop star's "visual album" arrives Friday on Disney+. Given that the last time Beyonce made something similar she crafted the dazzling film "Lemonade," "Black Is King" — like most things involving Beyonce — is a major event. This one, a fantasia celebrating black identity, comes as a companion piece to last year's Beyonce-curated album "The Lion King: The Gift." She has described it as "a story of how the people left most broken have an extraordinary gift and a purposeful future."

"The Fight": Elyse Steinberg, Josh Kriegman and Eli Desnoes' documentary honored for social impact filmmaking at this year's

Sundance Film Festival, follows the work of the American Civil Liberties Union during the presidency of Donald Trump. It's multifront battle that, in this riveting account, encompasses conflicts over immigration, abortion and voting rights. As the directors showed in the excruciatingly entertaining 2016 Anthony Weiner documentary "Weiner," they have talent for colorful fly-on-the-wall filmmaking of politics in action. Here, they focus on four tireless ACLU attorneys. Magnolia Pictures releases "The Fight" on-demand Friday.

— AP Film Writer Jake Coyle

Music

That's what new friends are for: Musical icon Burt Bacharach and Kacey Musgraves producer Daniel Tashian have teamed up to release a new five-song EP out Friday, with the "Blue Umbrella" and features Bacharach on piano and Tashian on

vocals. Tashian has worked with a handful of country acts, but he's best known for his magic on Musgraves' epic 2018 album "Golden Hour," which earned him his first pair of Grammys. Bacharach, a six-time Grammy winner and three-time Oscar winner, is one of music's most revered composers.

R&B powerhouse Brandy on Friday is releasing her first independent album, "B7," her seventh studio release. It's the Grammy winner's first album in eight years, and it features collaborations with Chance the Rapper, Daniel Caesar and her daughter Sy'rai, who sings on "High Heels" and performs background vocals on the single "Baby Mama."

It's been a busy year for Grammy-winning rocker Alanis Morissette: She celebrated the 25th anniversary of her groundbreaking "Jagged Little Pill" album, and a musical version of the record debuted on Broadway in December. On Friday, she drops her first new album in eight years, "Such Pretty Forks in the Road."

— AP Music Editor Mesfin Fekadu

AMC, Universal shorten exclusivity to 17 days

In a sign of how the COVID-19 pandemic is remaking Hollywood traditions, AMC Theatres and Universal Studios on Tuesday announced an agreement to shorten the exclusive theatrical window to just 17 days for the studio's films.

The standard window of exclusivity typically runs about 90 days. Until now, the largest chains have refused to screen films that don't give releases a lengthy and exclusive run in theaters.

The new deal covers Universal films for the next three years.

After a run of at least three weekends, Universal (and its specialty label, Focus Features) will have the option of steering a film to premium on-demand, including AMC's own service, but not standard on-demand or other home platforms.

From The Associated Press

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OPINION

Diverse military deserves diverse Congress

By BRIAN GREER
Special To The Washington Post

U.S. Air Force Gen. Charles Brown was unanimously confirmed last month as the Air Force's chief of staff. Brown is the first African American to lead a U.S. military service and the first African American to serve on the Joint Chiefs of Staff since Colin Powell — 27 years ago. Brown's outstanding achievement gives African Americans a much-needed seat at the leadership table in the U.S. military. But even Air Force Gen. John Hyten, the vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the second-highest-ranking officer in the American military, acknowledged that it is "absolutely not right" that it has taken nearly three decades for that to happen.

The Joint Chiefs is not the only sphere that suffers from a lack of representation. When it comes to congressional oversight of the United States' armed forces, our nation has a serious diversity problem.

The House and Senate armed services committees are two of the most powerful standing committees in Congress. They provide oversight at the functional levels for the Department of Defense and portions of the Department of Energy — nearly half of the government's discretionary budget. The Senate Armed Services Committee has the distinguished mission of advising and consenting on the nominations of senior military and civilian nominees for the Defense Department. But African American voices are almost nowhere to be found on these critical committees.

Rep. Anthony Brown, D-Md., is the only elected African American member of Congress on either the House or Senate armed

services committees. These committees decide on pay raises for service members, regulate their health and housing benefits, and can even limit deployments or redeployments. Rep. Brown brings a distinguished military background to the committee, having retired from the U.S. Army Reserve as a colonel and having served both as an aide and as a JAG officer. In addition to his military service, he was Maryland's lieutenant governor, both of which make him a powerful voice in Congress.

But one voice is not enough. The national defense authorization and appropriation bills from the 2020 fiscal year authorized \$738 billion toward defense spending. The death of African American voices on civilian oversight committees is even more stark considering that 17% of our nation's 2.1 million service members, about 357,000, are black, yet they are the least represented on their oversight committees.

There are many reasons for the lack of diversity in the U.S. national security establishment. The national security estate can be complex and exclusive, which creates a steep learning curve for those who wish to enter. One does not simply apply to be the secretary of the Army, Navy or Air Force; the most talented of individuals still need a senior-level person to sponsor and guide them through the pipeline. For civilians, the armed services committees are that powerful stage. But as things stand now, the utter lack of diversity at the top ranks makes it more difficult for a younger generation of women and racial minorities to visualize a clear pathway for success in the national security apparatus.

Rep. Brown was the only African

American voice present during committee consideration of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021, which will change the laws regulating the military's ability to disperse peaceful protesters and remove Confederate names and the display of the Confederate flag from Defense Department installations. Both Gen. Brown and Rep. Brown deserve better.

Americans deserve more diversity in those rooms and on committees. As new African American members are sworn into the 117th Congress, they should strongly consider serving on the House and Senate armed services committees to give their constituents and African American service members more of a voice on these issues. It is unacceptable that these conversations and decisions about our racial history are being made about us, but without us in the room.

African Americans have served in every war for the United States, dating back to our founding. African American soldiers are the largest and longest-serving minority group of the armed services. In a time when our country is reckoning with a dismal record of injustice for African Americans, it is imperative that the health and safety of more than 350,000 African American service members are determined in part by a committee that includes only one person who looks like them.

In a truly just society, congressional committees should reflect the rich composition of the service members they oversee. It is past time to right this wrong.

Greer is a principal with Klein/Johnson Group and was formerly a staffer for the House Armed Services Committee and Sen. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y.

Extend eviction help before kids return to school

By LAVAR EDMONDS
Special To The Washington Post

Parents, students and teachers across the country are anxiously watching as school districts make wrenching decisions about how to start the upcoming academic year in the middle of a ramping pandemic. But, for many families, a crucial deadline for determining whether this school year will be a success or a disaster has already arrived: the end of the federal eviction moratorium on July 24.

If Congress can't get its act together to extend this moratorium and expand its coverage, or if states and localities don't extend and expand their own protections, landlords can start moving to kick renters out of their homes, or a disaster has already arrived: the end of the federal eviction moratorium on July 24.

If Congress can't get its act together to extend this moratorium and expand its coverage, or if states and localities don't extend and expand their own protections, landlords can start moving to kick renters out of their homes, or a disaster has already arrived: the end of the federal eviction moratorium on July 24.

With many school districts shifting to online instruction this fall, students are expected to trade school buildings for spaces in their homes, a change predicated on students having homes in the first place. What happens when that space isn't there, or when students are suddenly displaced?

Effects on children's educational outcomes, health and cognitive development.

The possibility that more children will be expelled into housing instability is growing. Survey estimates suggest nearly one-third of U.S. households fell short on their housing payments in July; 19% of households couldn't pay anything toward housing at all in the first seven days of the month. While banks may work with delinquent mortgage holders to develop payment plans, there is no eviction protection means renters, or over 14 million households with children, are especially at risk of losing their homes.

Regaining stability after an eviction in normal times isn't easy, since an eviction record can make it difficult to obtain new housing. Changing residences may force students to move to schools midway through the school year. Along with housing security, students' ability to complete schoolwork online will be thrown into disarray, as the pandemic has closed typical alternative sources for internet access such as libraries. Though initiatives like providing internet hot spots might help, they won't solve the problem of pushing students into homeless shelters or crowded residences after an eviction not only will negatively impact achievement but also contradicts scientific evidence for combating COVID-19. Even when tenants keep their homes, living on the brink of eviction means less money for other needs, resulting in, for example, a 48% increase in child food insecurity compared with 2018. We can't expect children to learn when they're hungry.

More insidiously, rampant eviction will expand racial disparities in academic achievement. Black households experience higher rates of eviction filings. Landlords file against Black renters at about twice the rate as they do against white renters.

Mass eviction that disproportionately impacts Black families will exacerbate inequitable access to needed resources and further contribute to closing academic achievement gaps.

For renters facing unprecedented financial instability, legislators have stepped in with only a loose tourniquet. The federal CARES Act halted evictions for tenants who receive housing assistance or live in residences carrying federally backed mortgages, but only accounted for between 28% and 46% of renters. Concurrently, many states and counties have also imposed their own restrictions on evictions. In some parts of the country, these measures temporarily curbed eviction filings.

These measures haven't completely protected students from moving to evicted tenants anyway, however, and nearly all of the lingering protections will expire by the time students enter virtual classrooms this fall. Without swift action, an avalanche of evictions awaits: Recent estimates suggest the pandemic could result in 28 million people losing their homes.

While federal policy tends to address education and housing separately, they are unequivocally linked. That connection will be paramount this upcoming school year.

Evictions wreak havoc on tenants, their families and their communities in the best of times. These are far from the best times, and every typical day is a struggle, and we're careening toward an unprecedented catastrophe. If we care about keeping students safe, and if we care about educational equity, we need to find ways of keeping children home while still providing high-quality, easily accessible education.

That starts with making sure they have homes at all.

Edmonds is a research specialist at Princeton University's Eviction Lab.

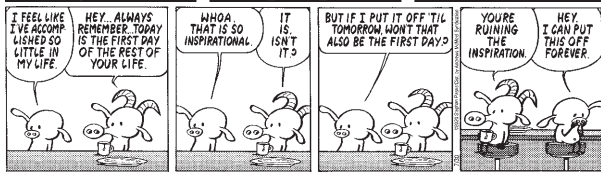
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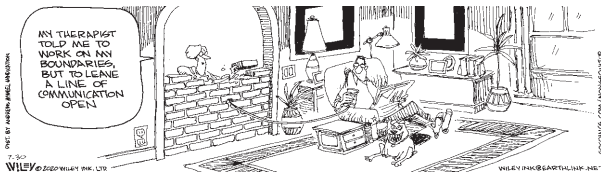
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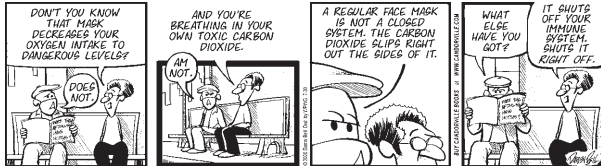
Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem



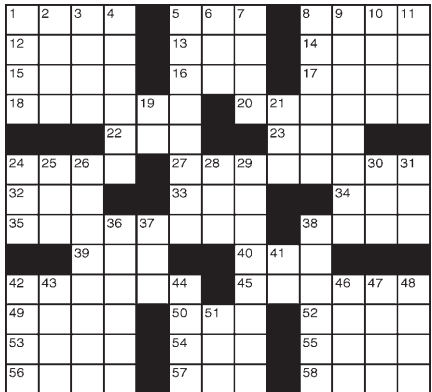
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Kermit, for one
- 5 Flow out
- 8 Despot
- 12 "— & Stitch"
- 13 Paris appellation
- 14 Director
- 15 Waffle brand
- 16 Pledge
- 17 "No —!" ("Sure thing!")
- 18 Tennis great Andre
- 20 Brews, as tea
- 22 Greek vowel
- 23 Rap sheet letters
- 24 Easter entrees
- 27 Harrison or Franklin
- 32 Brit. record label
- 33 Asian language
- 34 Judge Lance
- 35 Mosque towers
- 38 Unforeseen problem
- 39 Equi-
- 40 Ecol. watchdog
- 42 Squanders
- 45 Wet
- 49 Words to Brutus
- 50 Kimono sash
- 52 Pedestal
- 53 Grime
- 54 Actress Tyler

DOWN

- 55 To boot
- 56 Eyelid woe
- 57 Fawn's mama
- 58 Any time now
- 21 Mahal precursor
- 24 Height of fashion?
- 25 "— dreaming?"
- 26 Cleric's calling
- 28 Chow down
- 29 Sudden plunge
- 30 Suffix with senior
- 31 Eggy quaff
- 36 Shrewd
- 37 Sturgeon product
- 38 Brazilian dances
- 41 Ma's mate
- 42 Marries
- 43 Bickering
- 44 Auctioneer's cry
- 46 — Alto, Calif.
- 47 Canadian gas brand
- 48 Very bright
- 51 Life story

Answer to Previous Puzzle



7-30

CRYPTOQUIP

OPAAQA DPTD'Q QBNAYP TD
QD VICZ EMD PAUKQ
DSANAIGBMQUZ VI
SAGMOVIL UBYAS ETOC KTVI:
UMNETS-LAS.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE BOYS USING PLAY-DOH TOGETHER ARE ACTING SO ARTIFICIALLY FRIENDLY. THEY'RE ALL PUTTY-BUDDY.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals H



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Pro basketball

WNBA				
At Bradenton, Fla.				
EASTERN CONFERENCE				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	2	0	1.000	—
Washington	2	0	1.000	—
Atlanta	1	0	1.000	½
Connecticut	1	2	.000	2
New York	0	1	.000	1½
Indiana	0	1	.000	1½

WESTERN CONFERENCE				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Seattle	2	0	1.000	—
Minnesota	1	1	.500	1
Los Angeles	1	1	.500	1
Las Vegas	0	1	.000	1½
Phoenix	0	1	.000	1½
Dallas	0	1	.000	1½

No games scheduled

Tuesday's games

Washington 94, Connecticut 89

Chicago 96, Los Angeles 78

Seattle 90, Minnesota 66

Deals

Tuesday's transactions

BASEBALL
Major League Baseball
AMERICAN LEAGUE
CLEVELAND INDIANS — Designated RHP James Hoyt for assignment. Selected the contract of C Beau Taylor from the alternate training site.

HOUSTON ASTROS — Exercised 2021 club option for managed pitcher Gaby Pettit. Selected the contract of RHP Andruw Jones for assignment. Selected the contract of RHP Andruw Jones for assignment. Selected the contract of RHP Andruw Jones for assignment.

KANSAS CITY ROYALS — Signed RHP Matt Harvey to a minor league contract. Placed LHP Mike Montgomery and Foster Griffin on the 10-day IL. Recalled of Nick Heath and RHP Jake Newberry from the alternate training site.

LOS ANGELES ANGELS — Activated IF Luis Rengifo from the IL. Placed IF Andruw Jones on the 10-day IL. Recalled RHP Josh Boras from the alternate training site.

SEATTLE MARINERS — Selected the contract of C Joe Judge from the alternate training site. Placed RHP Cory Kluber on the 60-day IL. Placed RHP Lody Taveras on the alternate training site. Recalled OF Adolis Garcia from the alternate training site. Activated LHP Brett Martin from the 10-day IL.

NATIONAL LEAGUE
ATLANTA BRAVES — Designated RHP Mike Foltynewicz for assignment. Recalled RHP Chad Sobotka from the alternate training site.

CINCINNATI REDS — Activated C Tucker Barnhart from the paternity list. Placed RHP Robert Stephenson on the 10-day IL.

LOS ANGELES DODGERS — Placed LHP AJ Pineda on the 10-day IL. Recalled RHP Josh Boras from the alternate training site.

MILWAUKEE BRAVES — Claimed RHP Mike Mirmo from waivers from Milwaukee. Placed RHP Josh Boras on the 10-day IL. Recalled RHP Josh Boras from the alternate training site. Placed RHP Josh Boras on the 10-day IL.

NEW YORK METS — Selected the contract of LHP David Peterson from the alternate training site. Designated RHP Taylor Bashir for assignment.

PITTSBURGH PIRATES — Placed RHPs Kyle Crick and Clay Holmes on the 10-day IL. Recalled RHP Geoff Hartline from the alternate training site. Recalled RHP Miguel Del Pozo from the alternate training site.

ST. LOUIS CARDINALS — Placed RHP Miles Mikolas on the 10-day IL. Recalled RHP Miles Mikolas from the alternate training site. Recalled RHP Miles Mikolas from the alternate training site. Recalled RHP Miles Mikolas from the alternate training site.

TEXAS RANGERS — Placed RHPs Kyle Crick and Clay Holmes on the 10-day IL. Recalled RHP Josh Boras from the alternate training site. Recalled RHP Josh Boras from the alternate training site. Recalled RHP Josh Boras from the alternate training site.

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Pro soccer

MLS is Back tournament

KNOCKOUT STAGE
Saturday, July 25
Orlando City 1, Montreal 0
Philadelphia 1, New England 0
Sunday, July 26
New York City FC 3, Toronto 1
Sporting Kansas City 0, Vancouver 0
Sporting Kansas City advances on penalties 3-1

Tuesday, July 27
San Jose 5, Real Salt Lake 2
Los Angeles FC 4, Seattle 1
Tuesday, July 28
Minnesota 1, Columbus 1, Minnesota advances 5-3 on penalty kicks
Cincinnati 1, Portland 1, Portland advances 4-2 on penalties 4-2

Quarterfinals
Thursday, July 30
Philadelphia vs. Sporting KC
Friday, July 31
Orlando City vs. Los Angeles FC
Saturday, Aug. 1
Portland at San Jose
Minnesota at New York City FC

Semifinals
Wednesday, Aug. 5
Quarterfinal winners
Thursday, Aug. 6
Quarterfinal winners
Final
Tuesday, Aug. 11
Semifinal winners

NWSL Challenge Cup

Championship
Sunday, July 26
Houston Dash 2, Chicago Red Stars 0

CINCINNATI BENGALS — Signed QB Joe Burrow and WR Tee Higgins to rookie contracts.
CLEVELAND BROWNS — Waived DE Trevon Young.

DALLAS COWBOYS — Signed DT Antwan Woods to an exclusive rights free agent tender.
DENVER BRONCOS — Waived C Nico Falah.

GREEN BAY PACKERS — WR Devin Funchess is opting out of the 2020 season.
HOUSTON TEXANS — Claimed DE Albert Ruggins off waivers from Philadelphia. Waived LB.

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS — Placed TE Mo Alie-Cox, DE's Jegede Jegede and Kemoko Turay on the active/physically unable to perform list. Released TE Matt Lengel.

JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS — Claimed OL Garrett McHugh off waivers from Buffalo.
MIAMI DOLPHINS — Placed CB Xavier Howard on the active/physically unable to perform list. Placed CB Xavier Howard on the active/physically unable to perform list.

MINNESOTA VIKINGS — Placed DT Michael Pierce on the reserve/COVID-19 list. Placed CB Neville Clarke and WR Quantez Davis on the active/non-football injury list.

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS — LB Dont'a Hightower, RB Brandon Bolden, OL Marshawn Kneeland and FB Danny Vitale are opting out of the 2020 season. Re-signed WR Will Hastings.

NEW YORK GIANTS — Claimed CB Shakai Talbot off waivers from Denver. Waived DE Benear. Placed CB Shakai Talbot on the 10-day IL.

PITTSBURGH STEELERS — Signed RB Wendell Smallwood to a one-year contract.
SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS — Signed CB Emmanuel Moseley to an exclusive rights free agent tender. Placed DT Ronald Blair II, Kenneth Street and Julian Taylor, WR Shawn Poindexter and CB Diontae Johnson on the reserve/physically unable to perform list. Placed DJ Reed Jr. and WR Debo Samuel on the active/non-football injury list.

TAMPA BAY BUCCANERS — Signed T Tristan Wirgin, S Antoine Winfield Jr., RB Ke'Shaun Vaughn, WR Tyler Johnson, LB Shaquil Barrett, LB Kenneth Street and Julian Taylor, WR Shawn Poindexter and CB Diontae Johnson on the reserve/physically unable to perform list. Placed DJ Reed Jr. and WR Debo Samuel on the active/non-football injury list.

WASHINGTON FOOTBALL TEAM — Signed T Kevin Pampelle and LB Donald Payne.

HOCKEY
NATIONAL HOCKEY LEAGUE
NASHVILLE — Signed F Anthony Richard to a one-year, two-way contract.

COLLEGE
TUSCULUM — Kade Bell as Associate Head Coach/Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks coach, John Pascoe as Offensive Line/Recruiting Coordinator/Ram Game Coordinator, Ryan Smith as Running Backs Coach, Trent Turckett as Tight Ends/Defensive Line Coach.

Camp eyes on baseball; opt-outs dominate news

By BARRY WILNER

Associated Press

Brady and Brees aren't the B words dominating the opening of NFL training camps.

Try baseball and babysitting.

As veterans report Tuesday for COVID-19 testing, with on-field work far on the horizon for now, eyeballs are focused on the pandemic issues in Major League Baseball. The coronavirus outbreak with the Miami Marlins, who won't be playing any games the rest of this week, is foremost in the football world.

"You know, for what's going on in baseball right now, it affects everyone," Jets quarterback Sam Darnold said. "I mean, because you look at the game the Marlins had and, you know, they affect the players on the other team. ... There's no good way of really going about it. And you've got to start canceling games."

"So it's just a matter of what the league wants to do. And, if people start getting or contracting the virus within the NFL, it'll be interesting to see how the NFL wants to handle it."

Titanis coach Mike Vrabel said he is not using the word worried, but "obviously, (we're) always very concerned about the health and safety of our players and their family and the coaches and our staff in this building. But until we see how our protocols and our plan that the NFL and the players association thought so hard to put into place, till we see how these are going to function and work, we can't make any changes. We have to follow the plan."

Nobody knows if the plan will work, of course.

Falcons coach Dan Quinn said baseball players having positive tests led to the question of "How does travel affect that and the testing when you go on the road and when you don't?"

Quinn said he was enjoying baseball's return, "so I was disappointed to see the outbreak had affected games being played. So, it's definitely something we all discuss for sure."

What Broncos President Joe Ellis won't be discussing is keeping tabs of where his players go and what they do. At least not yet.

"We can't control what happens when they go home. We're not going to babysit them and spy on them or anything like that," he said.

"They're grownups. We'll just ask them to conduct themselves appropriately to take care of themselves such as they'll be taking care of the whole organization, their teammates specifically, and their coaches. And we've got some good guys on the team I think that can help get that message through to them."

The biggest news from NFL teams Tuesday dealt with opt-outs. Any player who decides not to play this season will get a \$150,000 stipend if it is a voluntary move, and \$350,000 if it is for pre-existing medical reasons.

Opting out were several key members of the New England Patriots: linebacker Dont'a Hightower, a defensive leader; safety Patrick Chung; offensive tackle Marcus Cannon; running back Brandon Bolden; and fullback Dan Vitale. Chung's decision was confirmed by a person familiar with the situation who spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because it had not been announced.

Defensive tackles Star Lotulelei of Buffalo and Kyle Peko of Denver, Eagles receiver Marquise Gooden, Chiefs guard Laurent Duvernay-Tardif, Vikings defensive tackle Michael Pierce, and Ra-



PHILAN M. EBENHACK/AP

Defensive end Joey Bosa has agreed to a six-year, \$135 million contract extension with the Los Angeles Chargers, according to multiple people familiar with the decision.

vens kick returner De'Anthony Thomas also have opted out.

Staying put

In one of the biggest moves of the day, defensive end Joey Bosa agreed to a contract extension with the Los Angeles Chargers that two people familiar with the deal said is worth \$135 million over five years.

The people spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity Tuesday night because the contract has not been finalized. ESPN was the first to report on the deal.

The Chargers confirmed Bosa has agreed to the extension but did not disclose financial terms.

Bosa was entering the fifth and final season of his rookie contract. There was some thought that he would hold out if an agreement had not been reached, but he reported to camp on Tuesday.

Showing up

Running back Dalvin Cook arrived at Minnesota's facility for coronavirus testing as scheduled with the rest of the team's veterans, according to a person with knowledge of the situation, speaking on condition of anonymity because the team did not make the reporting process public.

Cook, who has begun the fourth and final year of his rookie contract with a base salary of slightly more than \$1.3 million, is seeking a new deal. He backed out of the virtual offseason program last month after negotiations stalled.

Whether Cook will choose to take part in practice without a contract extension is unknown. With the first on-field workout not until Aug. 12, there's time for the team and his camp to come to an agreement. Simply showing up on Tuesday was critical for Cook, regardless of what his feelings might be about the front office is approaching his status and value. According to the new collective bargaining agreement, Cook would have been subject to a maximum \$50,000 fine per daily absence and forfeited a season of accrual toward unrestricted free agency had he held out.

AP Pro Football Writers Dennis Waskaz Jr., Josh Dubow, Dave Campbell, Arnie Stapleton and Teresa Walker, and Sports Writers Charles Odom and Joe Reedy contributed.

NHL

Home-nation advantage?

Host Canada has shot at ending Cup drought

By JOHN WAWROW
Associated Press

Ken Dryden became so accustomed to winning championships with the Montreal Canadiens the Hockey Hall of Fame goalie has difficulty assessing Canada's Stanley Cup drought.

"It is bizarre," Dryden recently told The Associated Press by phone from his home in Toronto.

"If you go back to the records, I remember, from 1944 to 1979, Canadian teams won 24 times or something," he said. "It's just amazing that was the case. And then from 1993, not at all. It is just a weird anomaly."

Canada's Cup total over that 35-year span is actually 27, with Dryden and the Canadiens claiming six of them from 1971-79.

But who's counting? "Yeah, it's time," Dryden said. "It's been time for quite some time for a Canadian team to win. And I would think it would be fantastic if that happened."

And on Canadian ice, no less.

The NHL playoffs are scheduled to be held exclusively in Canada, with games set to open in Toronto and Edmonton, Alberta, on Saturday. Not since 1925 has every NHL playoff game been held north of the border, when Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver and Victoria were in the four-team mix.

And yet, even with six of Canada's seven franchises competing in this year's 24-team format, there is no guarantee one of them will become the first in 27 years to win the Cup since Montreal defeated the Los Angeles Kings in five games.

The streak is so long that 22-year-old New York Islanders

prospect Kieffer Bellows wasn't even born when his father, Brian, hoisted the Cup for Montreal.

"We've talked about it sometimes," said Bellows, who was born in Minnesota, where his family maintained an off-season home. "Being from Canada (my father) is going to cheer for Montreal and stuff. He's always going to have a soft place for them in his heart."

The same goes for Philadelphia first-year coach Alain Vigneault. As former coach of the Canucks, Vigneault was in the most recent position of ending Canada's drought in 2011, when the Canucks lost the Final in Game 7 to Boston — also the last time the Cup was awarded in Canada.

"There's no doubt that in Canada, hockey's the No. 1 sport. You can probably say everybody's focused on it 24 hours a day," said Vigneault, whose Flyers will compete in a first-round series to determine first-round playoff seeding. "There was obviously positive pressure in Vancouver I felt. And there's some positive pressure here in Philly."

Where once a Cup drought such as this would've made a significant dent in a passionate hockey nation's psyche, the same can't be said today.

Dryden, who went on to enjoy a successful career as an author, scholar and politician, believes Canada is a far more self-confident nation.

"Canada in 2020 is different from the Canada in 2000 or 1980," said Dryden, who also noted how Canadians feared they were losing a grip on hockey with the NHL expanding into nontraditional U.S. markets and the Colorado Avalanche winning the Cup



PAUL CHIASSON, THE CANADIAN PRESS, ABOVE, RYAN REMIOWZ, THE CANADIAN PRESS, BELOW/AP

Above: Montreal Canadiens general manager Marc Bergevin watches practice at the team's practice facility in Brossard, Quebec. Montreal was the last Canadian team to win the Stanley Cup, in 1993. **Below:** Former goaltender Ken Dryden won six Stanley Cups with the Canadiens from 1971-79.



in 1996, their first season after relocating from Quebec City.

"We are a much more self-assured place than we used to be," Dryden said. "We're good at a lot of things And we know that we have created something pretty special here."

Important as hockey is to Canada, it is no longer the everything it once may have been, Tory added, noting how the Toronto Raptors captivated the nation in winning the NBA championship last year.

The game once predominantly played by Canadians is also now awash with American and European stars, with German Leon Draisaitl and Russian Artemi Panarin vying with Canada's Nathan MacKinnon for MVP honors this year.

"Those things could've shaken us a lot, and maybe did. But I don't think that's the case now," Dryden said.



NATHAN DENETTE, THE CANADIAN PRESS/AP

A mural in Toronto pays tribute to health-care workers.

Racial equality statements begin to unfold

By STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

Philadelphia Flyers and Pittsburgh Penguins players lined up shoulder to shoulder during the U.S. and Canadian anthems before the first exhibition game of the NHL's restarted season, while members of the Boston Bruins plan to lock arms for the songs to promote racial equality.

The league said it would feature Black Lives Matter and other social justice issues during opening ceremonies this weekend in Toronto and Edmonton, Alberta. NHL executive Steve Mayer expects other demonstrations to happen organically.

That began Tuesday afternoon with orange and white jerseys alternating along the two blue lines at Scotiabank Arena. Flyers center Sean Couturier, who scored

during his team's 3-2 overtime victory, said players discussed it before the game.

"It was something for equality and justice, (anti) racism," Couturier said. "It was to respect people, your opponent. We're a pretty big rival, but at least it shows the way that we have respect for each other, the same as in life."

Pittsburgh captain Sidney Crosby highlighted that "a lot has happened" since the last NHL game in March before play was halted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We felt, both teams, that it was important to show unity given what's gone on and just wanted to be part of the solution moving forward," Crosby said.

Earlier Tuesday, the Bruins became the first team to announce its intentions to highlight racial injustice as part of what players said is "a sign of solidarity with the

Black community."

"Over the past several months we have been trying to educate ourselves and learn more about racial injustice in our country and around the world," Bruins players said in a statement. "This action is solely intended to be a positive sign of support for the Black community and a way for us to use our platform to help end racism."

Columbus Blue Jackets defenseman Seth Jones hinted Monday at a possible arrangement with the Bruins, their opponent in an exhibition game Thursday.

"We may do something with them before the game and just show a united front that we're all here, we all care and we're all trying to make a difference in the world," said Jones, who is Black. "Obviously we're trying to create a cultural change, not just in hockey but around the world."

NBA

Eastern Conference preview

Bucks hope to complete the job this season

By BRIAN MAHONEY
Associated Press

There were no defenders nearby. There wasn't even another team on the court.

Giannis Antetokounmpo's shooting display was nothing spectacular. Dozens, perhaps hundreds of NBA players would knock down a few three-pointers in a row under the same circumstances.

None has the Greek Freak's combination of size and athleticism.

So, videos of his perimeter progress quickly made the rounds on social media, serving more as a warning than a highlight. If Antetokounmpo can shoot like that in real games, maybe the Milwaukee Bucks can finish the job and win the title this season.

"I think I'm in a good place right now," he said.

The Bucks are too, bringing the NBA's best record into the resumption of the season next week at Walt Disney World.

Even as he won the MVP award last year and built a strong case to repeat this season, a consistent outside shot has been a weakness in Antetokounmpo's game. The muscular 6-foot-11 forward can go end to end for a dunk in just a few dribbles, but hasn't been as reliable spotting up to shoot.

The Toronto Raptors exploited that last season, with versatile, big defenders such as Kawhi Leonard, Pascal Siakam and Serge Ibaka who could keep Antetokounmpo from the rim and make him shoot outside. He didn't make enough of them, and the Raptors charged back from a 2-0 deficit in the Eastern Conference finals en route to their first NBA championship.

Even with Leonard gone, the Raptors loom as one of the biggest threats to the Bucks again. Toronto is 46-18 and could benefit from the four-month stoppage that allowed Marc Gasol a chance to rest a left hamstring injury that nagged him during



MORRY GASH/AP

Reigning MVP Giannis Antetokounmpo of the Milwaukee Bucks has been working on his outside game, a development that concerns the rest of the Eastern Conference.

the second half of the season.

"To be honest right now, I'm not worried about being at 100% or feeling like I'm all the way there," Siakam said. "I think it's going to be a process and I think the goal for us as a team, not just me, is just to peak at the right time."

Boston isn't far behind Toronto and neither is Miami, which has the type of rugged defenders who could bother the Bucks.

But Milwaukee (53-12), leading the league in scoring and beating teams by an average of 11.2 points, appears even stronger than last season's team that won 60. The Bucks believe this season they have enough to go all the way, even without getting to use the home-court advantage they likely would have earned.

"We're all going through something we haven't been through before," All-Star Khris Middleton said. "It's an even playing field for the most part, so it's just who's going to be the better team."

Things to watch around the East:

Celtics' chances

Boston has one of the deepest teams in the East and emerging stars Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown both won player of the week awards in February. But the third-place Celtics began their workouts at Disney with Kembra Walker limited by a knee injury and they may not be good enough to beat the top teams in the conference if their All-Star point guard is limited.

Oladipo's options

Victor Oladipo originally planned to skip the restart but has instead been practicing with his Indiana Pacers teammates and played in their first scrimmage. Should he feel his surgically repaired quad tendon feels good enough, the two-time All-Star would boost a team that is tied for fifth place but is only two games behind No. 4 Miami.

Sizing up the Sixers

Philadelphia (39-26) has been disappointing this season, tied for fifth in the East in large part because of a 10-24 record on the road. The Sixers won't have to worry about playing in anyone else's arena this season, so maybe a team with talented big bodies such as Joel Embiid, Ben Simmons, Tobias Harris and Al Horford can still reach its potential.

Battered at the bottom

The Brooklyn Nets lost starters Spencer Dinwiddie and DeAndre Jordan after they tested positive for the coronavirus and won't get Kevin Durant and Kyrie Irving back from surgeries until next season. They enter play in seventh place, a half-game ahead of Orlando, but both should like their chances of holding off ninth-place Washington. The Wizards will be without leading scorer Bradley Beal and three-point threat Davis Bertans.

Short on scorers

Antetokounmpo, averaging 29.6 points, is the only one of the top four scorers in the East playing in the restart. Beal (30.5), Atlanta's Trae Young (29.6) and Chicago's Zach LaVine (25.5) aren't at Disney.

Western Conference preview

A wild race is ahead for 8th and 9th place

By TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Add this plot twist to an unusual NBA season: To get the No. 8 seed in the Western Conference, a whole bunch of teams will enter the final two weeks of the regular season trying to finish ninth.

Yes, ninth.

All the drama in the West when the NBA season resumes at Walt Disney World on July 30 after a 4½-month break because of the coronavirus pandemic will come from the bottom of the standings and the race just to get into the playoffs.

Memphis comfortably holds eighth place, which ordinarily would mean a playoff berth. But not this year, not with five teams with realistic chances of forcing a play-in series by finishing ninth and within four games of the team in eighth — which, barring a collapse, would be the Grizzlies.

"We obviously know our eight-game seeding schedule is going to

be a challenge," Memphis coach Taylor Jenkins said. "All teams playing for playoff positioning, getting into the playoffs ... I mean, we're going to have high-competitive games."

If the Grizzlies go 5-3 in their seeding games, they're assured of no worse than a spot in the play-in series — a best-of-two match-up between the No. 8 and No. 9 teams when the regular season ends, provided the No. 9 team is within four games of eighth. The No. 9 team would have to go 2-0 in that series to advance.

The challengers all have a storyline.

San Antonio is aiming to become the first team in NBA history to make 23 consecutive postseason appearances. Sacramento is aiming for its first playoff trip in 14 years; Phoenix is aiming for its first playoff spot in 10 years, with those droughts the longest in the history of each franchise. New Orleans is trying to get in and extend J.J. Redick's streak of making the playoffs in

every season since his freshman year of high school. Portland is seeking a seventh consecutive postseason spot.

Add it all up, and inside the bubble, there's going to be a sprint to the finish in the West.

"The mark of success for us was going to be to play meaningful games in March and April," said David Griffin, the executive vice president of basketball operations for the New Orleans Pelicans. "This is now going to be meaningful games in July and August, but we're going to get to do that. That was important to us because of our young core."

Who's in

The Los Angeles Lakers need a combination of three wins or Los Angeles Clippers losses to clinch the No. 1 spot out West — assuming the Lakers don't go 0-8 at Disney while the Denver Nuggets go 8-0. The Lakers, Clippers and Nuggets have clinched playoff berths, as have Utah, Okla-

homa City and Houston. Dallas needs only one win in its final eight games to wrap up the No. 7 seed, so that realistically leaves six teams for the one remaining playoff spot.

Who's out

Only Minnesota and Golden State failed to make the restart out of the West.

Zion's start

New Orleans rookie Zion Williamson, who has missed much of the practice window at the restart because he left the bubble to tend to a family situation, has scored 448 points in his first 19 games. He's the 14th player in NBA history to have at least that many points in the first 19 appearances of his career, and the first to do so since Michael Jordan (486 points) in 1984-85. As of Friday, Williamson had not yet returned to the bubble.

Back on top

The Lakers should be the No. 1 seed for the first time since 2010 when they were also the season in which the Lakers won their most recent championship. The Lakers have reached the NBA Finals in each of the last four seasons where they have entered the playoffs as the No. 1 seed out West.

Sub-.500 playoffs?

It's possible — and if there's a play-in series, very possible — that a losing record will be good enough to get into the West playoffs for the first time since 1997. That year, Minnesota, Phoenix and the Clippers all got into the postseason despite finishing the regular season below the .500 mark. Memphis is 32-33 going into the restart and all five of the other still-contending clubs for that last spot are already at least eight games below .500 with eight games remaining.

NBA



MARK J. TERRILL/AP

Los Angeles Clippers celebrate from the bench as Cleveland Cavaliers guard Collin Sexton, left, walks away during the second half on Jan. 14 in Los Angeles. At the NBA restart, where the only fans in the building are the ones wearing uniforms, enthusiasm from players on the bench is getting noticed.

Say cheese: Bench energy is real, loud during restart

By TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Dion Waiters took an open three-pointer and about 75 feet away, a dozen or so of his Los Angeles Lakers teammates all seemed to leap from their seats in unison.

"SAY CHEESE!" they yelled, dragging out the last syllable for effect.

At Staples Center back in Los Angeles, such a yell would have been heard by the Jack Nicholson-types in the super-expensive seats. But at the NBA restart, where the only fans inside the building are the ones wearing uniforms, that sort of enthusiasm is most definitely getting noticed.

"It's a bunch of different things that they'll be screaming," said Waiters, whose teammates were playing off his 'Philly Cheese' nickname with the salute they directed his way. "But it feels good. That's the only thing I got. Some guys like myself, we like to play off the crowd and their enjoyment. But the teammates, they're there, supporting you. It's a win-win."

There will be some crowd-noise elements when the seeding games — essentially the resumption of the regular season — begin Thursday night. Music will blare and the 17-foot video boards surrounding three sides of the courts in each arena will even sometimes show real fans who logged in to "cheer" for their team.

But the biggest source of

‘Good teams’ benches are alive, very active, very verbal — probably too verbal sometimes.’

Doc Rivers
Los Angeles Clippers coach

cheerleading will come from the benches, and some coaches are even encouraging players not in the game to be active that way.

"To reference that and try to coach it and try to praise it, it's on my mind," Philadelphia coach Brett Brown said. "To ignore it and not reference it, I don't do that."

Brown's 76ers had the NBA's best home record this season, going 29-2 in games at Wells Fargo Center. He'd love to see his players replicate that energy in all the neutral-site games that will be played the rest of the way this season.

"You have to decide where you want to spend your money and that one is important to me," Brown said. "You're talking about our spirit enduring. Anything you can do to help that — point it out, praise it, coach it — is on my mind."

When Deandre Ayton of the Phoenix Suns made a three-pointer in a scrimmage on Sunday against Boston, something he's never done in a "real" game during his two NBA seasons, some of his teammates leaped over the video board at the corner of their bench and onto the floor in celebration.

Hours later, in that same bench

area for the next game, Carmelo Anthony of the Portland Trail Blazers spent much of the fourth quarter leaning on the top of that video screen and barking out encouragement. And when little-used players get a chance to score in these scrimmages, their teammates have made sure they hear the instant celebration.

"I've always thought, for the most part, benches do that anyway," Los Angeles Clippers coach Doc Rivers said. "I just think you don't notice it because the fans are making so much noise. But good teams' benches are alive, very active, very verbal — probably too verbal sometimes."

Miami coach Erik Spoelstra said the bench activity can help what's happening on the court and has encouraged the Heat to "be mindful" of those situations.

"When the energy or momentum swings, you don't want it to be quiet," Spoelstra said. "We need to be intentional about doing that."

Rivers is certain of one thing: Games won't seem quiet.

"I think the NBA will keep figuring out ways of creating noise," Rivers said. "I know they don't want to hear the coaches yelling. So, if I'm them, I would create more noise."

Game: Playoff hopefuls have short time to get in

FROM BACK PAGE

Lakers, the eight remaining games before the playoffs are about tuning up their games. For most of the other teams that have clinched berths, it's about securing the best possible playoff seed. And for the hopefuls, it's about finding a way to get into the field and stay at Disney at least a couple of weeks longer than planned.

"We want to get back to work," said San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich, whose Spurs will aim to become the first franchise in league history to make 23 consecutive playoff appearances. "We want to do what we're all used to doing. We want to do as much as we can, safely, to energize the country, to play the games we all love. And as long as we can do that safely, it's a big win for everybody."

Starting Friday and running through Aug. 14, there will be at least four and sometimes as many as seven games per day, spread out over a three-arena corner of the Disney complex. There will be many instances where three games are happening at once. And there will be days that have games running for more than 10 consecutive hours.

After no basketball for what seemed like forever, a hoops smorgasbord awaits.

"It's the biggest and best AAU tournament ever," New Orleans coach Alvin Gentry said.

The biggest names are here: reigning MVP Giannis Antetokounmpo of the Bucks, LeBron James of the Lakers, scoring

champion James Harden of Houston, plus the reigning Finals MVP and All-Star game MVP in Leonard. Of the 25 players on this season's All-Star rosters, 23 are at Disney and a 24th — Indiana's Domantas Sabonis — may return if his injured left foot heals.

Also here: the defending champions. Toronto lost Leonard and Danny Green to the Clippers in free agency this past offseason — more than a year ago now. And then the Raptors laughed off suggestions that they wouldn't be good enough to make the playoffs. They enter the restart holding the No. 2 seed in the East, looking every bit like a team capable of another very deep run.

"We've been through it," Raptors guard Fred VanVleet said. "We never got the respect before the last couple months of last season. We're not used to getting pats on the back or flowers, so it's not really that different."

There are eight teams that were — Golden State, which went to the NBA Finals in each of the last five seasons before sputtering through an injury-plagued year this season, among them. The others whose seasons ended March 11: Minnesota, Cleveland, Detroit, Atlanta, New York, Charlotte and Chicago.

The longest timeout in NBA history is finally over. Game on, again.

"The intensity is going to start to pick up with the games just meaning much more," Philadelphia forward Al Horford said. "This is the position you want to be in."

Scoreboard

Schedule

All games in Orlando, Fla.

Thursday, July 30
Utah vs. New Orleans (AFN-Sports, 12:30 a.m. Friday CET; 7:30 a.m. Friday JKT)

L.A. Clippers vs. L.A. Lakers (AFN-Sports, 3 a.m. Friday CET; 10 a.m. Friday JKT)

Friday, July 31
Orlando vs. Brooklyn
Memphis vs. Portland
Phoenix vs. Washington
Milwaukee vs. Sacramento
San Antonio vs. San Antonio
Houston vs. Dallas

Saturday, Aug. 1
Miami vs. Denver
Utah vs. Oklahoma City
New Orleans vs. L.A. Clippers
Phoenix vs. Indianapolis
L.A. Lakers vs. Toronto

Sunday, Aug. 2
Washington vs. Brooklyn
San Antonio vs. Memphis
Sacramento vs. Orlando
Milwaukee vs. Houston
Dallas vs. Phoenix

Monday, Aug. 3
Toronto vs. Miami
Denver vs. Oklahoma City
Houston vs. Washington
Memphis vs. New Orleans
San Antonio vs. Philadelphia
L.A. Lakers vs. Utah

Tuesday, Aug. 4
Brooklyn vs. Milwaukee
Phoenix vs. Sacramento
Phoenix vs. L.A. Clippers
Orlando vs. Indianapolis
Boston vs. Miami
Houston vs. Portland

Wednesday, Aug. 5
Memphis vs. Utah
Philadelphia vs. Washington
Denver vs. San Antonio
New Orleans vs. L.A. Lakers
Toronto vs. Orlando
Brooklyn vs. Boston

Thursday, Aug. 6
New Orleans vs. Sacramento
Miami vs. Milwaukee
Indianapolis vs. Phoenix
L.A. Clippers vs. Dallas

Portland vs. Denver
L.A. Lakers vs. Houston

Friday, Aug. 7
Utah vs. San Antonio
Oklahoma City vs. Memphis
Memphis vs. Boston
Orlando vs. Philadelphia
Washington vs. New Orleans
Boston vs. Toronto

Saturday, Aug. 8
L.A. Clippers vs. Portland
L.A. Lakers vs. Denver
L.A. Lakers vs. Indianapolis
Phoenix vs. Miami
Phoenix vs. Dallas

Sunday, Aug. 9
Washington vs. Oklahoma City
Orlando vs. Toronto
San Antonio vs. New Orleans
Phoenix vs. Boston
Philadelphia vs. Portland
Houston vs. Sacramento

Monday, Aug. 10
Oklahoma City vs. Phoenix
Dallas vs. Utah
Toronto vs. Milwaukee
Indianapolis vs. Miami
Denver vs. L.A. Lakers

Tuesday, Aug. 11
Brooklyn vs. Orlando
Houston vs. San Antonio
Phoenix vs. Philadelphia
Portland vs. Dallas
Boston vs. Memphis

Wednesday, Aug. 12
New Orleans vs. Sacramento
Milwaukee vs. Washington
Toronto vs. Philadelphia
Miami vs. Oklahoma City
L.A. Clippers vs. Denver

Thursday, Aug. 13
Washington vs. Boston
Portland vs. Brooklyn
Sacramento vs. L.A. Lakers
Milwaukee vs. Memphis
New Orleans vs. Phoenix
Dallas vs. Phoenix

Friday, Aug. 14
Philadelphia vs. Houston
Miami vs. Indianapolis
Oklahoma City vs. L.A. Clippers
Denver vs. Toronto

Stratton	1/2	0	2	2	2	1
Del Pozo	0	1	2	2	3	0
Hartlieb W,1-0	2	2	0	0	0	0
Burdi S,1-1	1	0	0	0	1	1

Yardley pitched to 2 batters in the 5th, Del Pozo pitched to 4 batters in the 7th.
HBP—Holland (Hura), Suter (Frazier).
WP—Holland. T—3:22.

Milwaukee					
Lindblom	3½	3	2	2	3
Yardley	1	0	0	0	0
Suter	1½	3	4	2	1
Knebel BS,0-1	½	1	0	0	0

Wahl L, O 1	1	2	2	2	0	0
Pittsburgh						
Holland	5 1/2	2	2	2	3	5
Stratton	1/2	0	2	2	2	1
Del Bene	0	1	3	3	3	0

Del Pozo	0	1	2	2	3	0
Hartlieb W,1-0	2	2	0	0	0	1
Burdi S,1-1	1	0	0	0	1	1

Yardley pitched to 2 batters in the 5th.
Del Pozo pitched to 4 batters in the 7th.

WP—Holland. T-3:22.

MLB

Marlins idle through weekend; schedule reworked

By STEVEN WINE
Associated Press

MIAMI — Major League Baseball suspended the Miami Marlins' season through Sunday, and the Philadelphia Phillies will remain idled by the coronavirus pandemic until Friday, while the rest of baseball forges ahead with trepidation.

There's real fear, there's real anxiety for me, for all my teammates," Milwaukee Brewers slugger Ryan Braun said Tuesday. "I think we've found it very difficult

to focus on baseball at all the last couple of days."

In the wake of a virus outbreak that infected half the Marlins' team, Braun said MLB players are constantly assessing whether they should keep playing.

But MLB came up with a patchwork schedule for the rest of this week and said that among more than 6,400 tests conducted since Friday, there were no new positives involving on-field personnel from any team other than the Marlins.

In a statement, MLB said it wanted to

allow the Marlins time to focus on providing care for their players and to plan for a resumption of play next week. MLB also postponed the three remaining games in this week's Phillies-Yankees series.

The Marlins remained stranded in Philadelphia, where they played last weekend. The Phillies-Yankees games were postponed "out of an abundance of caution," MLB said, although no Phillies players have tested positive.

The Marlins had been scheduled to play at Baltimore on Wednesday and Thursday.

Instead, the Yankees will play at Baltimore on those days.

Miami's three home games this weekend against Washington were postponed. Nationals players had voted against making the trip, manager Dave Martinez said.

"We all decided that it was probably unsafe to go there," Martinez said.

Additional MLB rescheduling during the week of Aug. 3 will be announced later this week. New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo offered up his state to any team needing a place to play.



AARON DOSTER/AP

Chicago Cubs shortstop Javier Baez avoids the tag at home from Cincinnati Reds' Curt Casali. Baez homered twice and doubled in his team's 8-5 win Tuesday in Cincinnati.

Baez homers twice as red-hot Cubs down Reds

By JOE KAY
Associated Press

CINCINNATI — Two homers, a debt dive to score another run, and a couple of smooth-as-ever defensive plays. Vintage Javier Baez, in time to keep the Cubs' surge going.

The sensational shortstop led the way offensively Tuesday night and Alec Mills went six solid innings for an 8-5 victory over the Cincinnati Reds that fit Chicago's early pattern.

Chicago has won four of its first five games, scoring first in each one. Jason Kipnis' triple — Shogo Akiyama lost it in the sun — sparked the offense. Baez took it from there, emerging from a slow start that included two singles in his first four games.

"When Javy plays well, it's infectious for the team," manager David Ross said. "Javy makes so many things happen."

Mills (1-0) added to the Cubs' stretch of impressive starts. Mills, who made four spot starts last season, held the Reds to two hits in six innings. Chicago's starters have a 1.80 ERA and a 1.31 opponent batting average this season.

Baez had a hand in that, too, making a couple of hit-stealing plays behind Mills.

"Oh my goodness," Mills said. "You turn around and seeing that is comforting, seeing him there."

Cincinnati got two-run homers by Nick Castellanos — his first since signing a \$64 million deal — and Freddy Galvis but fell to 1-4, tied for the worst start in the majors.

Baez had a solo shot and a two-run homer as Chicago pulled away, loudly cheering each hit and celebrating each run in the dugout.

"That's been a big thing here in the clubhouse," Baez said. "We're having more fun than anything. (Anthony) Rizzo has been crazy trying to make us be together and it's working."

Kipnis tripled in the third off Tyler Mahle — Akiyama lost sight of the ball in center field — and scored on Nico Hoerner's single. Kipnis added an RBI single an inning later.

Akiyama was in center field for Nick Senzel, who missed his third game because of sickness. The Reds had no update on his condition Tuesday. Senzel remains on the active roster.

Matt Davidson went on the injured list Saturday after testing for the coronavirus. Senzel and Mike Moustakas felt sick a day later, and Cincinnati put Moustakas on the injured list.

Castellanos said after the game that Senzel and Moustakas had negative COVID-19 tests and could return for the final game of the series.

"That's obviously been a big letdown because both of them are big parts of our lineup," Castellanos said.

Manager David Bell is looking forward to getting his everyday lineup back soon.

"They're a big part of our team," Bell said. "Each day we believe we're running a team out there that's competitive and that we believe in to win the game. We're going to be that much stronger when they come back."

Roundup

Dodgers top Astros in a testy rematch

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Benches cleared Tuesday night during Los Angeles' 5-2 win over Houston in the first game between the teams since it was revealed that the Astros illegally stole signs en route to a 2017 championship that came at the Dodgers' expense in the World Series.

The fracas occurred after Dodgers reliever Joe Kelly threw high-and-tight pitches to Astros stars Alex Bregman and Carlos Correa in the sixth inning.

Kelly threw an errant breaking ball over Correa's head. Correa, who homered and finished with three hits, took off his batting helmet and stared Kelly down before continuing the at-bat.

Kelly struck out Correa, then stuck out his tongue and made a face in his direction. Correa started walking toward him and the players exchanged words, prompting the benches to clear in the first such incident of this pandemic-delayed season. There was plenty of yelling and crowding — outlawed as MLB tries to play a 60-game season amid the pandemic — but no pushing or punches thrown.

Diamondbacks 4, Rangers 1: Merrill Kelly took a no-hitter into the seventh inning before giving up a home run as Arizona won at Texas.

Roughed Odo's one-out homer in the seventh was the first of three hits off Kelly (1-0), who struck out seven and walked one in 7½ innings.

The Rangers are last in the majors with a 1.56 team batting average and only six runs.

Angels 10, Mariners 2: Anthony Rendon hit a two-run homer and reached base three times in his debut with his new team, and Albert Pujols added his 657th career homer in host Los Angeles' victory over Seattle.

Max Stassi hit a three-run homer and Justin Upton drove in two runs as the Angels won their home opener for only the second time in eight years.

Blue Jays 5, Nationals 1: The reigning World Series champions dropped to 1-4 in the pandemic-shortened season with a loss to visiting Toronto that included two outfielders colliding on a homer

by Toronto's Vladimir Guerrero Jr., two errors by Starlin Castro that led to three unearned runs, and just one hit for Washington after the third inning.

The Nationals have lost three consecutive games, scoring a total of four runs.

Rays 5, Braves 2: Yoshi Tsutsugo hit a two-run single during a five-run third inning, and host Tampa Bay beat Atlanta for its fourth straight win.

Yonny Chirinos pitched four effective innings for the Rays after missing part of camp following a positive coronavirus test.

Pirates 8, Brewers 6: Adam Frazier hit a tiebreaking two-run homer in the eighth inning and host Pittsburgh rallied past Milwaukee.

Mets 8, Red Sox 3: J.D. Davis banged a two-run homer off the Pesky Pole, and left-hander David Peterson pitched 5½ innings to win his major league debut and New York sent host Boston to its fourth consecutive loss.

Indians 4-5, White Sox 3-3: Carlos Santana hit a three-run homer, Oscar Mercado had a two-run single and host Cleveland competed a doubleheader sweep of Chicago.

In the first game, Francisco Lindor and Bradley Zimmer each homered and drove in two runs, propelling the Indians to the win.

Twins 6, Cardinals 3: Josh Doerschinger homered and drove in two runs in his Target Field debut with his new team, Jorge Polanco hit a two-run shot and host Minnesota beat St. Louis.

Tigers 4, Royals 3: Jonathan Schoop and Christian Stewart each hit a two-run homer in the third inning to lift host Detroit over Kansas City.

Whit Merrifield hit a three-run shot in the third for Kansas City, but Tyler Alexander (1-0) and four other relievers kept the Royals scoreless for the final six innings.

Pedro's 5, Glas 3: Pedro Tatis Jr. hit a three-run homer, Wil Myers added a two-run drive and San Diego spoiled San Francisco's home opener.

Rockies 8, Athletics 3: Sam Hilliard homered and Antonio Senzate pitched out of an early jam on his way to a rare road win as Colorado beat Oakland.

SPORTS



Season on hold

After virus outbreak, Marlins' games postponed through Sunday » **MLB, Page 23**

Game on!

Clippers forward Kawhi Leonard, right, shoots while Pelicans guard Kenrich Williams defends on Nov. 24. Leonard was the NBA Finals MVP last season, leading Toronto to its first title.

KELVIN Kuo / AP



NBA back after 4½-month hiatus

By TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

GLAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Games were canceled. Practice facilities were shuttered. A season ended unceremoniously for eight teams. The draft process was delayed, as was free agency. Some players tested positive for the coronavirus. Many more took to the streets and used their voices to demand justice and equality as racism and police brutality sparked a nationwide conversation.

The world has changed since the NBA stopped on March 11.

For 22 franchises, however, there is a goal that remains in place.

The NBA, at long last, is officially back. A reopening night doubleheader inside the bubble at Walt Disney World awaits Thursday, when New Orleans takes on Utah before a matchup of the two teams in the Western

‘Nobody’s life is pretty much how they planned it to be at this point with the pandemic, so you take it for what it is.’

Kawhi Leonard
2019 NBA Finals MVP

20 weeks of waiting, wondering and worrying, the 2019-20 NBA season is ready to hit the restart button with a champion scheduled to be crowned in October.

“Nobody’s life is pretty much how they planned it to be at this point with the pan-

Conference — the Los Angeles Lakers and Los Angeles Clippers.

There won’t be any fans in attendance, health and safety protocols that were painstakingly written in response to the coronavirus pandemic will be paramount, and teams can’t even shower in the arena after games. But after

demio, so you take it for what it is,” Clippers forward and reigning NBA Finals MVP Kawhi Leonard said. “Everybody is happy that a champion will be crowned this year, and if that’s the 2020 championship, then we want it. You know, that’s how I look at it. This is what the layout is, as far as to go out there and complete this journey.”

The field for the 16-team playoff bracket that will be finalized next month is already largely filled — 12 of the 22 teams at Disney have clinched spots and Dallas is on the brink of another one. It leaves three teams vying for two spots in the Eastern Conference, and six teams fighting for one spot in the Western Conference.

For the front-runners, the NBA-leading Milwaukee Bucks and West-leading

SEE GAME ON PAGE 21

Milwaukee Bucks forward Giannis Antetokounmpo

NELL REDMOND/AP



Inside: Milwaukee, L.A. Lakers hold top seeds in respective conferences, Page 20

Canada trying to end 23-year Cup drought » **NHL, Page 19**

